User Guide

1.36, August 2012

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P: Preamble

Versions

SpotTrack manual v1.36, issued August 8th 2012.
This manual relates to SpotTrack v1.36, released August 1st 2012.

We'd be grateful if you could report any errors by email to:
spotmanualerrors@focustrack.co.uk.

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Thought of a new feature? Email spotideas@focustrack.co.uk

Show Credit

The show featured in the screen grabs in this manual is the Cameron Mackintosh / NETworks production of the National Theatre's *My Fair Lady*, which toured the UK in 2005-2006 and the US in 2007-2008.

The show's creative team was:

Director:	Shaun Kerrison, from the original by Trevor Nunn
Choreographer:	Fergus Logan, from the original by Matthew Bourne
Designer:	Matt Kinley, from the original by Anthony Ward
Lighting:	Rob Halliday & Oliver Fenwick, from the original by David Hersey.

More information at www.myfairladythemusical.com.

The spot cue sheets were created in early versions of SpotTrack by Matt Roper.

Thanks also to the other SpotTrack beta testers, particularly Dan Walker, Ellie Wright, Anna Mac, Kristina Kloss, Mary Reed.

1: Introduction

SpotTrack is a tool for creating and managing followspot cue sheets, for shows with one to four followspots. It is designed to be quick to learn, easy to use, and to both simplify many common tasks in managing followspots and to reduce the amount of typing you have to do.

In particular, it allows you to:

- work on each spot's cue sheet in isolation, or with multiple cue sheets side by side
- switch quickly between cue sheets
- define shortcut buttons for things you type regularly - character names, sizes, common instructions, intensities
- store additional information about each spot - type, colour setup, operator
- store additional information about the cast - character names, character pictures, cast names and more
- print spot sheets for each spot op, and master spot calling sheets for the spot caller; cue sheets can also highlight new or changed cues automatically if required.
- print character contact sheets for spot ops, perfect for introducing new spot ops or house spot ops meeting a touring show for the first time to the characters they will be following.

SpotTrack also supports charity: fifteen percent of the sale price of each SpotTrack licence goes to either Light Relief in the UK, or The ESTA Foundation's Behind The Scenes in North America - you get to choose which charity you support at the time of purchase. Find out more about these charities on p57.

2: Getting Going

Downloading SpotTrack

SpotTrack can be downloaded from www.SpotTrack.co.uk.

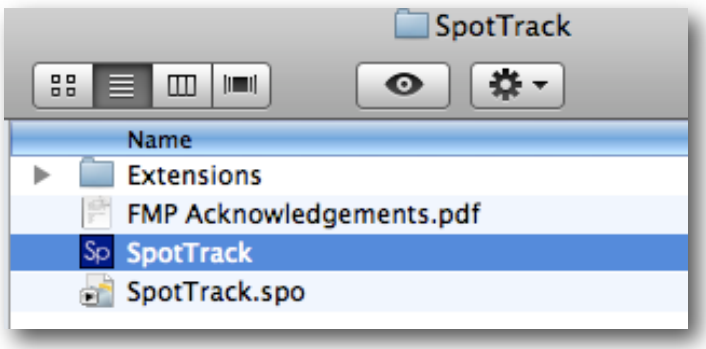
Versions are available for Mac and PC.

The Mac version requires Mac OS X v10.5.7 or later and at least 512Mb of RAM if using a G4 or faster processor, at least 1Gb of RAM if using an Intel processor, at least 2Gb of RAM if using OS X v10.7 or later.

The PC version requires Windows XP Professional (SP3) with at least 256Mb of RAM, or Vista with at least 1Gb of RAM.

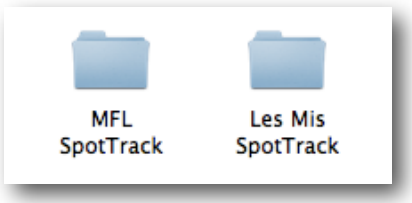
Downloading the appropriate version will give you a .zip compressed file containing SpotTrack. Double-clicking on the file will expand it to a folder containing SpotTrack.

On a Mac, there are two main files, SpotTrack (the application, with the Sp icon) and SpotTrack.spo (the data file):



On a PC, you will see more files, but the important ones are called SpotTrack.exe (with the Sp icon) and SpotTrack.spo (the data file).

Note that SpotTrack is self-contained - it is the application and the data file. You will need one SpotTrack for each show you wish to use SpotTrack on. You can re-name the folder - 'My Fair Lady SpotTrack' - and can store that folder wherever is convenient on your hard drive. You should not change the names of the files it contains.



Running SpotTrack

To run SpotTrack, double click on the ‘SpotTrack’ file on a Mac, or the ‘SpotTrack.exe’ file on a PC.

Purchasing SpotTrack

To run SpotTrack, you need to purchase a SpotTrack licence - which you can do via the website, www.spottrack.co.uk.

A SpotTrack licence costs £45.

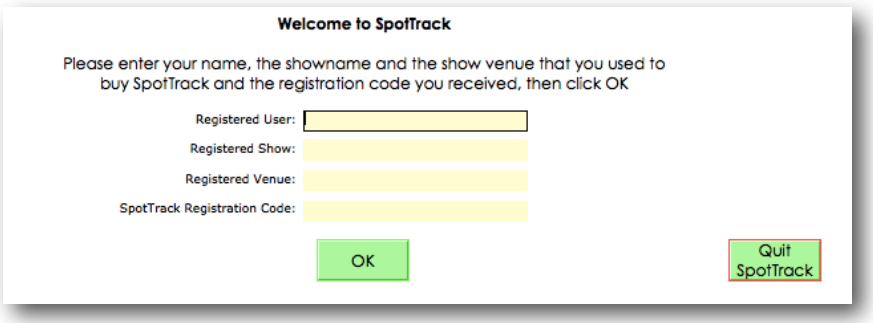
To purchase a licence, you will need to specify the Registered User, Registered Show and Show Venue for SpotTrack. The registered show should be the show name (‘My Fair Lady’); the venue could be the venue name or some other description, such as ‘UK Tour’.

Each SpotTrack licence is valid for one show only - think of SpotTrack as a consumable, like colour filters or lightbulbs.

Once you have registered and paid, you will receive a Registration Code by email, which will enable SpotTrack for that show. Note that this code is generated by a human being and so may not appear instantaneously.

Why do you have to purchase SpotTrack for each show? Because by doing so, you (and your venue) are supporting two fantastic lighting charities - Light Relief in the UK, and The ESTA Foundation’s Behind The Scenes in North America; you get to choose which when you purchase SpotTrack. You can find out more about these charities on p57.

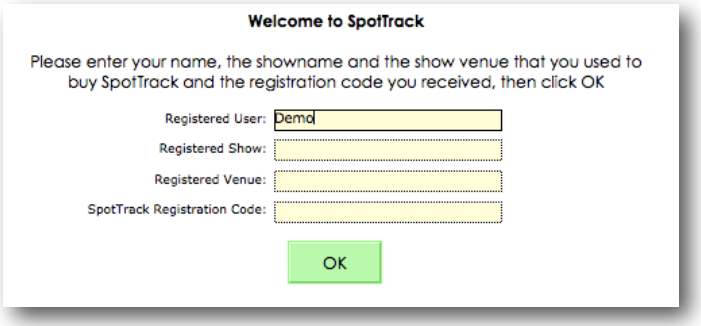
Once you have your Registration Code, you can enter it into SpotTrack to get to work; enter the information required then press ‘OK’.


Welcome to SpotTrack
Please enter your name, the showname and the show venue that you used to buy SpotTrack and the registration code you received, then click OK
Registered User:
Registered Show:
Registered Venue:
SpotTrack Registration Code:
OK
Quit SpotTrack

As part of the registration process, SpotTrack will ask for your name and a contact email; this information will be passed back to us purely for registration and technical support purposes, and to allow us to send you information about updated SpotTrack releases. If you don't want to receive update information, just check the 'don't send news about updates' box.

Trying SpotTrack

If you want to try SpotTrack before you buy, you can. Enter 'Demo' as the Registered User then press 'OK' and SpotTrack will run in demo mode.


Welcome to SpotTrack
Please enter your name, the showname and the show venue that you used to buy SpotTrack and the registration code you received, then click OK
Registered User:
Demo
Registered Show:
Registered Venue:
SpotTrack Registration Code:
OK

In this mode, you can only work on two spots, you won't be able to print cue sheets, and SpotTrack will quit just often enough to be borderline annoying (every thirty minutes). Apart from that, you should be able to get an idea of whether SpotTrack will be of use to you.

Every time you run SpotTrack in demo mode, it will give you a chance to enter a registration code; if you do so here you will be able to continue working with any cues you have already entered in SpotTrack.

3: Things To Note

There are a couple of ways in which SpotTrack differs from other applications that you should be aware of:

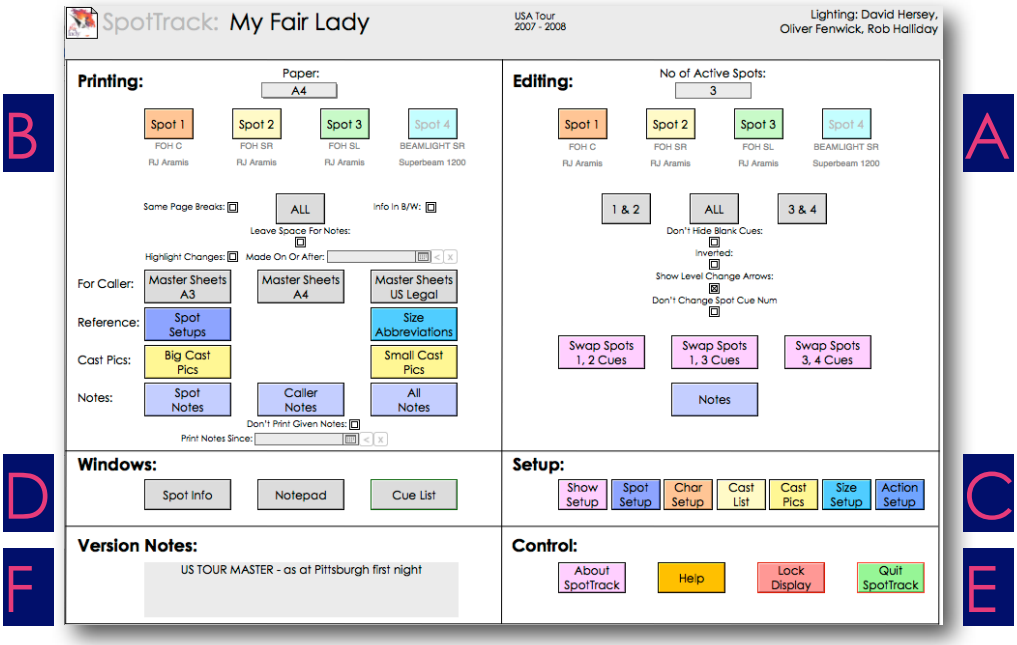
- Each SpotTrack contains both the SpotTrack application and the SpotTrack data file, contained within one folder. You should have a SpotTrack folder for each show you are using SpotTrack on. SpotTrack (and FocusTrack) work like this in an attempt to ensure that data remains accessible long-term, which can be important for shows with a long life, whether they be hit musicals or drama, opera or dance products that play in rep, but may drop out of the rep only to re-appear years later. In some cases, data associated with those shows has become unreadable - old MacDraw files that nothing can now open, for example! We hope that by having the application with the data, you'll have a better chance of being able to get into show data for a long time to come.

- No saving! You'll notice that there is no 'Save' command in SpotTrack. It is saving your data as you work, hopefully to help avoid that catastrophic moment when the power goes out and you realise you haven't saved for the last three critical hours of tech!

  Be careful, though: this also means that you can't work on the show for a bit then decide to save it as a new version. If you want to do that, you should copy the SpotTrack data file ('SpotTrack.spo', inside the SpotTrack folder) before you start work for the day, to ensure that you still have the previous version should you need it. This is good backup practice in any case, to ensure you have a backup in case you (or your computer) have a bad day.

4: Navigation

All of the features of SpotTrack can be accessed from the Main Screen:



You'll end up here when you start SpotTrack. You can always get back here by pressing ⌘-0 (on a Mac) or Ctrl-0 (on a PC), or by selecting Display > Main Menu.

The Main Screen is divided into six principal areas:

A. Editing: creating and making changes to cue sheets. See p26.

B. Printing: printing cue sheets. See p41.

C. Setup: configuring SpotTrack with information about your spots, your show, your shortcuts and more. See p12.

D. Windows: Opening additional windows with other information - a summary of your spot's setup, a notepad for taking notes, the cue list if you have imported it from FocusTrack. See p39.

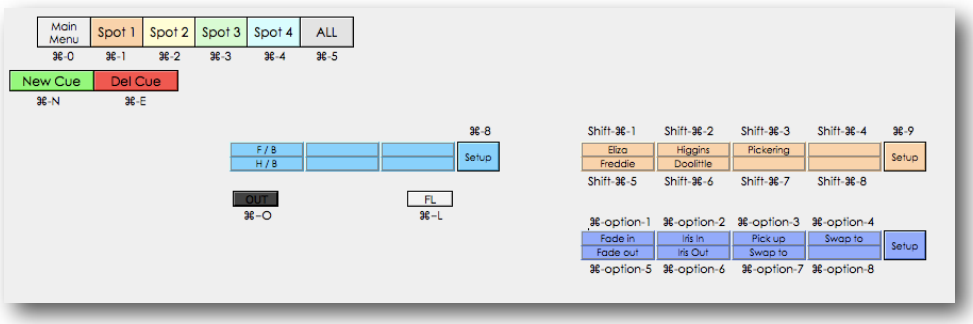
E. Control: Information about SpotTrack and some setup options. See p52.

F. Version notes: A place to quickly make note of where you are up to in the process of creating a show and which version of the spot cues SpotTrack currently contains - 'preview 1', 'first night' or whatever.

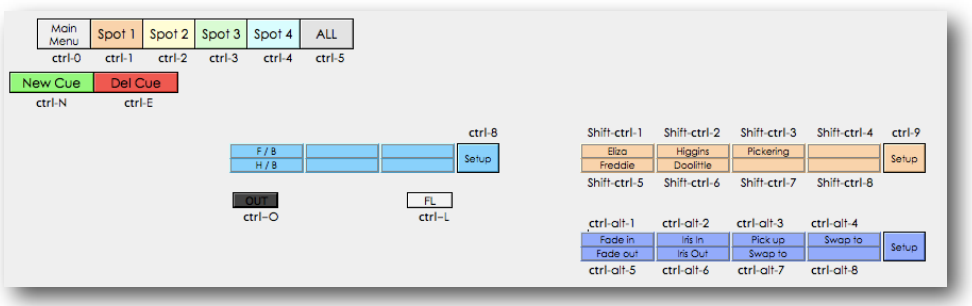
In general, SpotTrack is navigated by clicking on a button to take you to the information you want to work on. The most commonly used buttons also have keyboard shortcuts, the most important of which are:

Mac	PC	Action
⌘-0	ctrl-0	Return to the Main Screen
⌘-1	ctrl-1	Spot 1's cuesheet
⌘-2	ctrl-2	Spot 2's cuesheet
⌘-3	ctrl-4	Spot 3's cuesheet
⌘-4	ctrl-4	Spot 4's cuesheet
⌘-5	ctrl-5	All spot cuesheets
⌘-N	ctrl-N	Create a new cue
⌘-E	ctrl-E	Erase the selected cue
⌘-O	ctrl-O	Level OUT (thing **O**ut!)
⌘-L	ctrl-L	Level at FULL (think F**L**!)
⌘-I	ctrl-I	Set time for cue (thing t**I**me)
shift-⌘-X	shift-ctrl-X	Copy cue text from cuelist (think te**X**t)
⌘-G	ctrl-G	Add a script pa**G**e number to a cue

You can see more keyboard shortcuts by selecting 'Help' from the Control section of the main control screen, for Mac:



or PC:



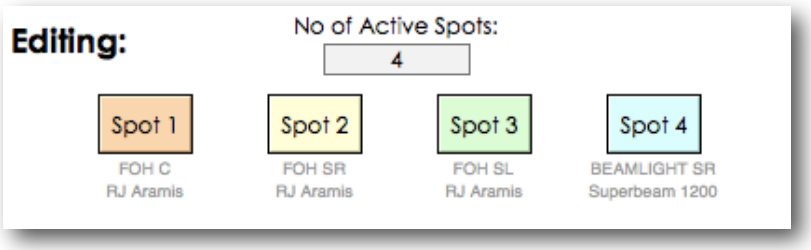
You can also jump between the various displays using the Display menu.

Note: You can customise the order or names of your spots, and re-arrange which keyboard shortcuts (keys 1-4) correspond to which spot. This allows you to re-arrange the spot buttons and cuesheets to match the physical layout of your spots. See p12.

5: Setup

Specifying The Number of Followspots

SpotTrack can handle from one to four followspots. You can choose how many spots you are working with by entering the number into the 'No of Active Spots' box at the top of the Editing area of the Main Screen.

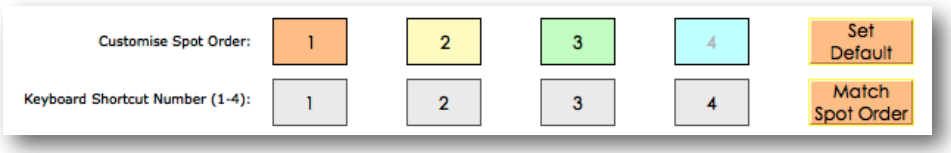


Note that any cue or spot setup information you enter is retained even if you you later reduce the number of spots (ie. if you change the number from 4 spots to 3, information for spot 4 is retained, useful if a tour goes to a house with fewer spots than normally required for the show).

Specifying The Followspot Layout

You can re-arrange the order in which the spots appear on the buttons and cuesheets to match the physical layout of the spots in our show (so you could have spots 4, 3, 2, 1), or re-number the spots altogether (so you could have spots 6, 7, 8, 9). You can also re-configure which of the 1-4 shortcut keys (⌘-1-4 on a Mac, ctrl-1-4 on a PC) correspond to which spot.

To configure this, press the About SpotTrack button on the Main Screen.



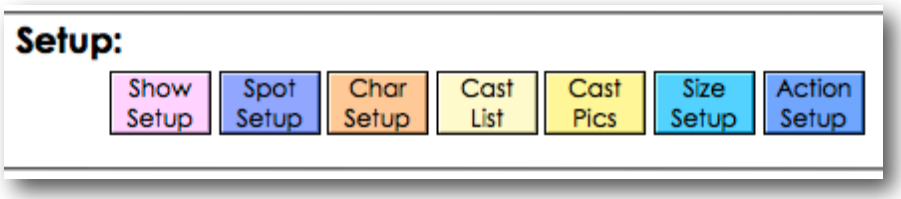
Click in one of the Spot Order buttons to type a new spot number. If you type a number that is already in use, that number and the number of the spot you selected will swap positions.

Set Default will return the spot order to 1-4; Match Spot Order will match the keyboard shortcut numbers to the spot numbers if possible, though the shortcut numbers will always be 1, 2, 3, 4.

Spot numbers will be changed wherever they appear in SpotTrack, on-screen and in print-outs.

Note: Re-numbering spots does not move any cue information about spots - it is effectively re-labeling the spot columns in the cuesheet. It is best done before starting work on a show. You can swap information between spots using the Swap Spots buttons on the main screen; see p37.

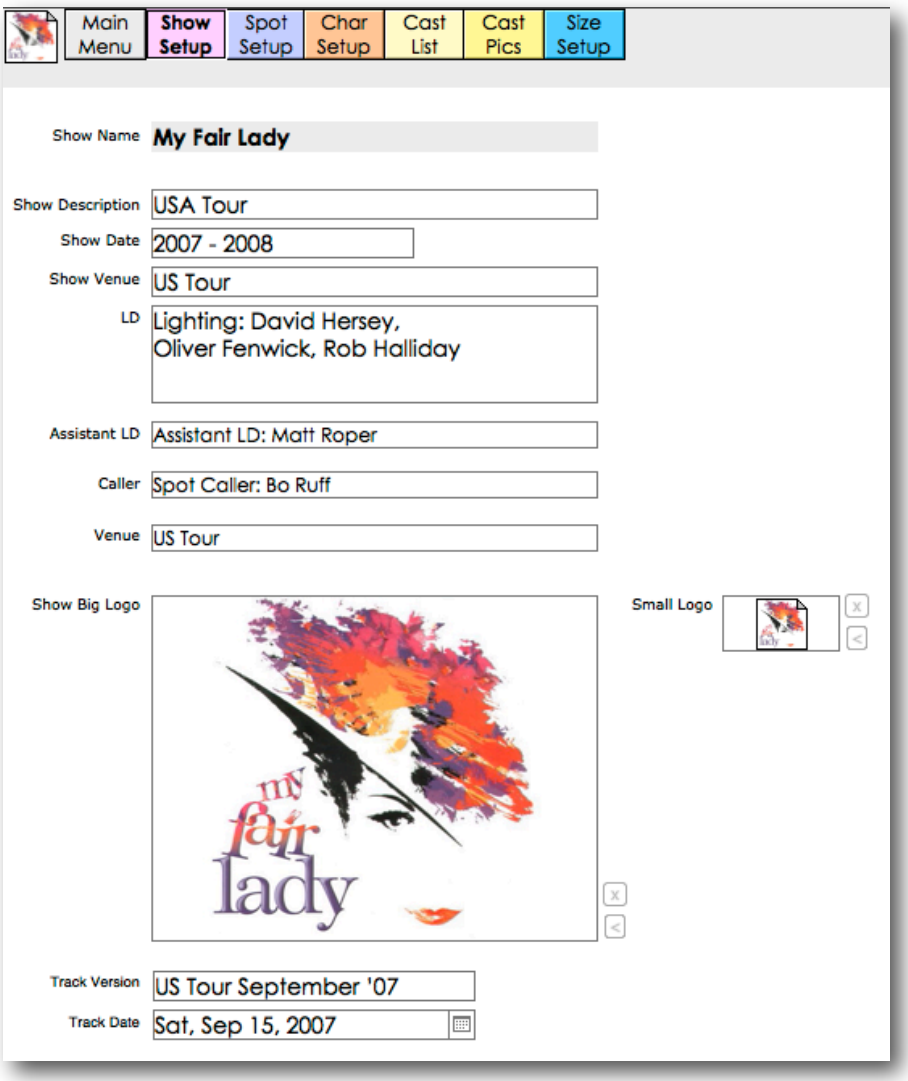
Setup Options



There are setup screens for show information, the spot setup, character setup, cast setup, cast pictures, size shortcut setup and action shortcut setup; you can get to these using the Setup buttons on the Main Screen, or jump directly from setup screen to setup screen using the appropriate buttons.

Show Setup

Show Setup lets you store information about the production - show name, lighting designer, lighting team and so on. The show name is the show name you specified when you purchased SpotTrack; this cannot be changed. The other information can be edited as required.



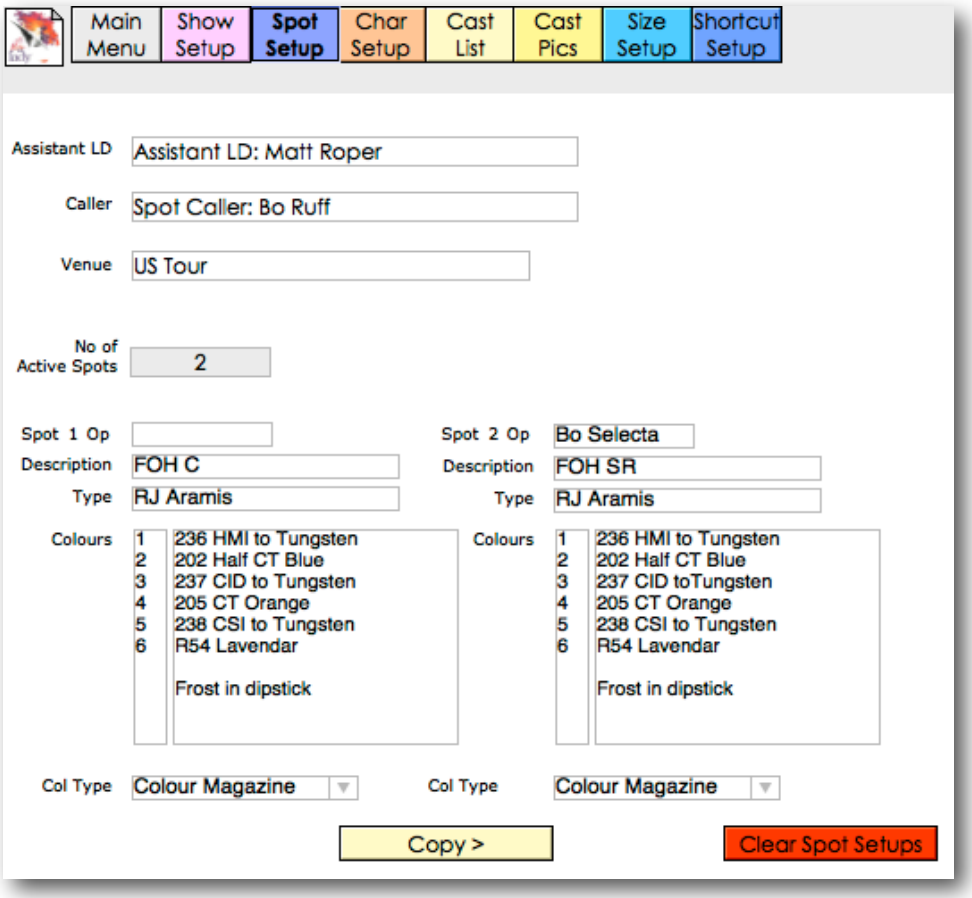
You can switch between fields by clicking, or using the tab key to step between them (shift-tab to move backwards).

Name fields should have the job title specified in full as you wish it to appear, ie. ‘Lighting: Jean Rosenthal’ rather than just ‘Jean Rosenthal’. This lets you specify the job titles as you prefer.

The ‘Show Big Logo’ and ‘Small Logo’ fields are intended for show logo graphics. The small logo is used in the top-left corner of cue sheets and on-screen; the big logo is used for the cover sheets of printed cue sheets. You can either paste graphics into these fields, or use the ‘<‘ button to select image files, and the ‘x’ buttons to clear the fields.

Spot Setup

Spot Setup lets you store information about the configuration of your followspots - the spot type, its position or other description, its colour magazine type and colour load, and the operator's name. This screen will only show the number of spots you currently have set as the number of active spots.

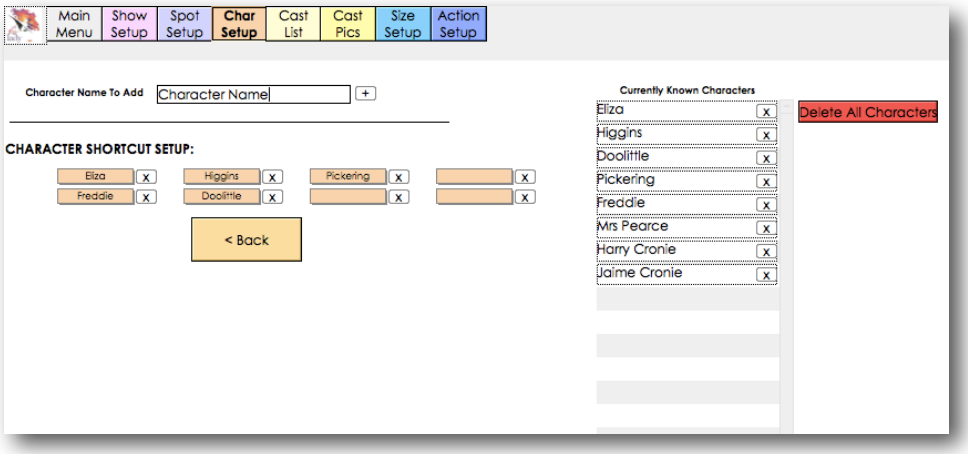


Information entered here is printed on cue sheets and appears in on-screen cue sheets but is only for reference - colour numbers entered in cue sheets do not reference back to colours specified here. This means that you can change a colour frame (making frame 2 into L201 instead of L202, perhaps) here and print a new spot cover sheet without having to update all of the cue sheet data.

You can move between fields by clicking on them, or using the tab key to move to the next field, and shift-tab to move back a field.

The 'Copy' buttons allow you to copy the entire spot setup (excluding the operator's name) from spot to spot. The 'Clear Spot Setups' button will clear all of the spot setups.

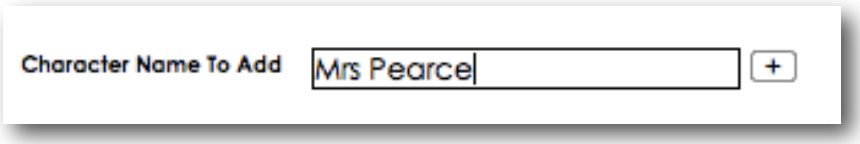
Character Setup



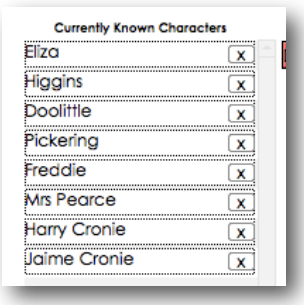
SpotTrack has on-screen ‘shortcut’ buttons, designed to reduce the amount of typing you have to do by loading the buttons with text you type regularly. The Character Shortcut buttons are intended to be loaded with character names.

SpotTrack offers eight on-screen character buttons, but you can store more than eight character names. You can then load different character names into the Shortcut buttons as required by different points in the show.

To add a character name to the list, type it into the ‘Character Name To Add’ box, then press the ‘+’ button.



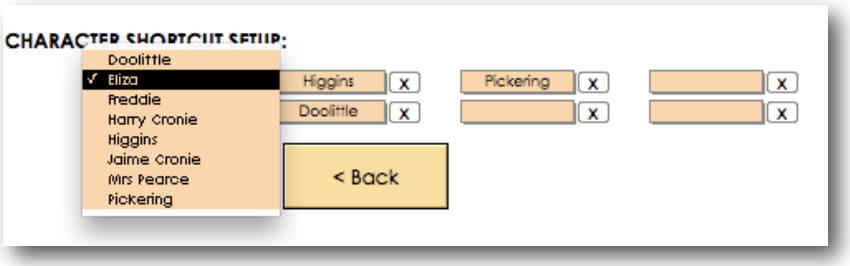
The character name will now appear in the list of known characters:



SpotTrack will only allow each character to appear in the list once, and will warn you if you try to add a character it already knows about.

To transfer a character to one of the Shortcut buttons, click on the button. A pop-up list will show the full list of characters; pick the character you want for

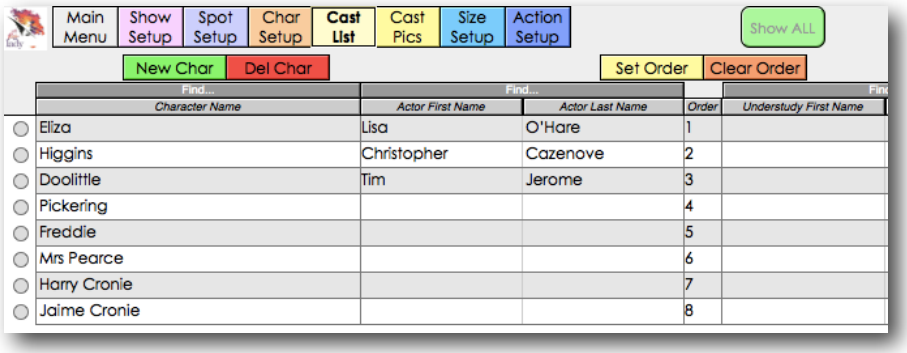
that button. If you want to clear a Shortcut button, press the ‘x’ next to that button:



You can delete individual characters from the Character List by pressing the ‘x’ button next to that character’s name. If you want to, you an delete all of the known characters using the ‘Delete All Characters’ button. In both cases, only the character list will be affected - any cue sheet information you have already entered will not be changed.

In cue sheets, a ‘Bold Chars’ toggle button appears next to the Char Setup button. When this button is toggled on, character names will be inserted in bold; when toggled off, character names will be inserted in normal text. You can change the formatting manually at any time after the text has been inserted.

Cast List

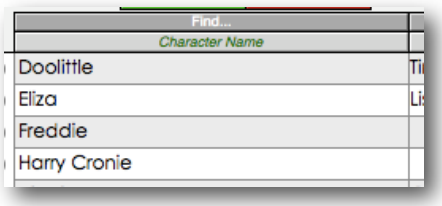


SpotTrack can store additional information about the Characters entered in Character setup - for example, the name of the cast member playing that part, the name of the understudy covering that part, the track name for that character. SpotTrack can also store pictures of the character - see Cast Pics below

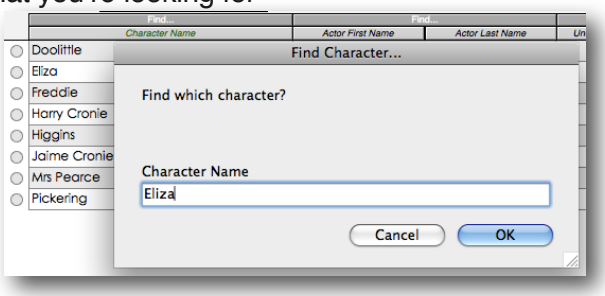
In the Cast List area, you can enter information about Characters, and can also add new characters - Characters entered here will appear in the Char Setup screen and be available to assign to Character Shortcut buttons.

You can add characters by pressing the New Char button, or delete characters using the Del Char button.

You can navigate around this list by clicking in a field, using tab and shift-tab to move right or left across a character. You can also sort by a field (the character name, for example) by clicking on the title of that column:



or you can look at just a particular thing - a particular character name, for example - by clicking on the 'Find...' button above that column then specifying what you're looking for

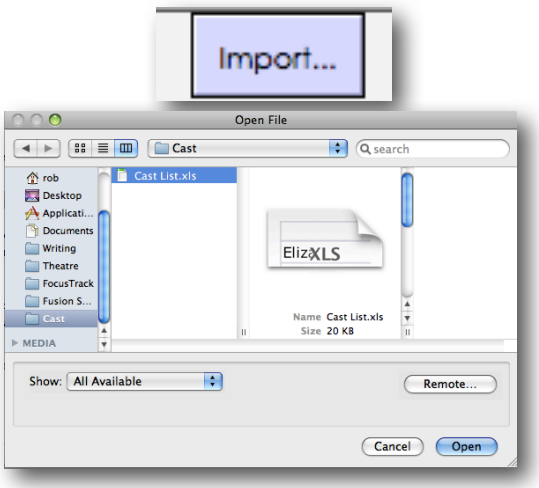


Finding something will only show matching entries. When you want to return to seeing the full character list, press the ‘Show All’ button:

You can specify a an order for characters by entering a number in the ‘Order’ column. If the characters are already in an order you like, you can set that order using the ‘Set Order’ button; you can also clear any numbers you’ve entered in this column using the ‘Clear Order’ button. You don’t have to specify any order information, but if you do that order will be used when you print any character or cast information, and in the Character List button that appears in the Character Setup screen.

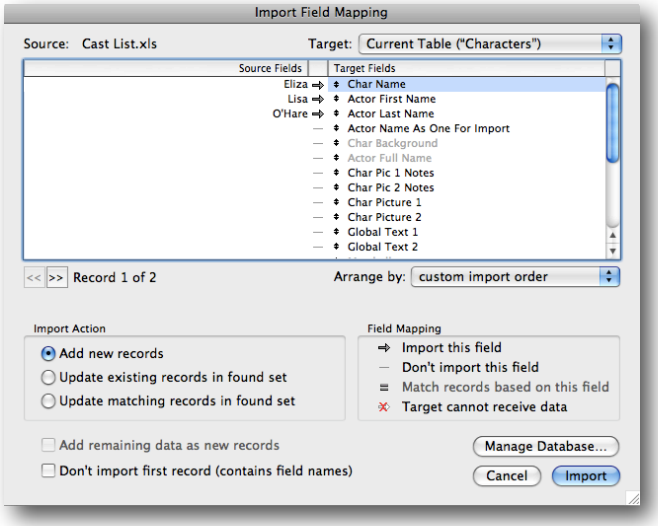
Importing Cast Information

If you already have a cast list in electronic format - for example, an Excel spreadsheet from your wardrobe department or company manager - you can often import that into SpotTrack rather than having to type everything from scratch. Click on the Import... button to bring up the import options:



This will ask you to select a file to import the information from. You can use the ‘Show:’ pop up to limit the type of files you can select

Once you’ve selected a file, you can decide how the information from your file is imported into SpotTrack:



Drag the 'target fields' up and down so that they match the information in your file. SpotTrack tries to store actor first and last names separately; if your file has them together ('Fred Smith' instead of 'Fred', 'Smith'), import that name into the field 'Actor Name As One For Import'. SpotTrack will split the name into first and last name after it has imported the information.

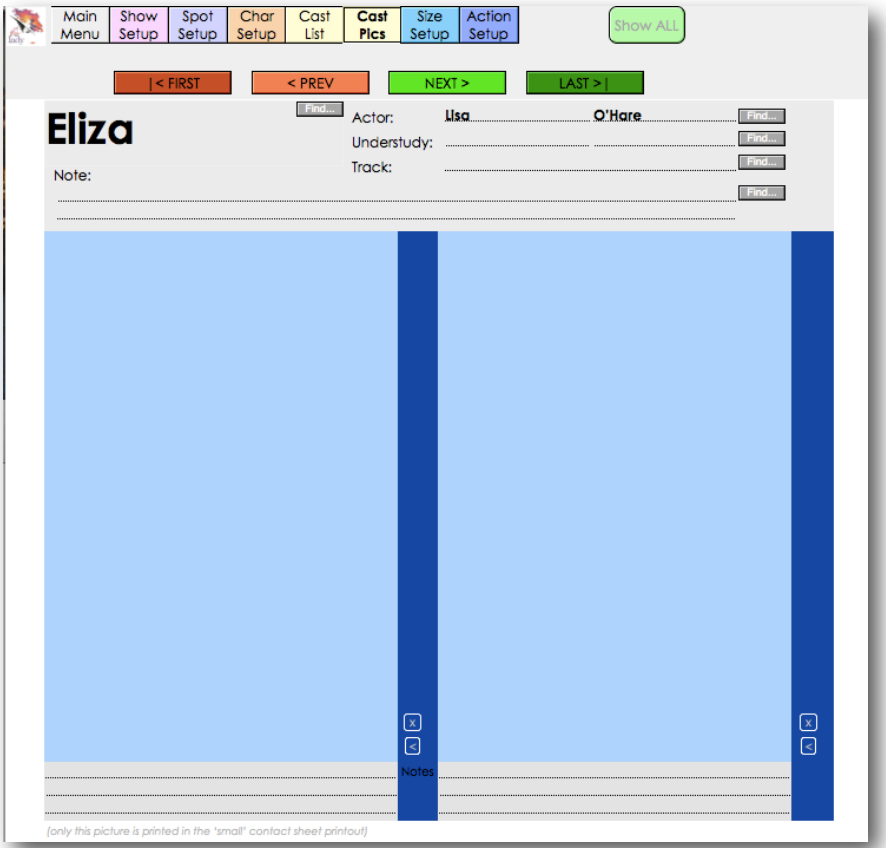
If your file has information that has no home in SpotTrack, click on the arrow to turn it off and ensure that information is not inadvertently imported.

Once you've lined up the fields correctly, press 'Import' to pull the information into SpotTrack. After import you should check the information carefully to make sure everything has ended up in the right place.

To add pictures to a character, you can either click on the 'Cast Pics' button or press the circle to the left of the character name; both will take you to the same place.

Cast Pics

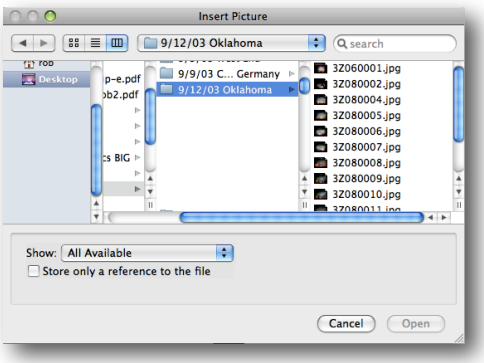
SpotTrack can store pictures of each character, allowing you to print contact sheets of characters for spot operators - this can give house spot ops meeting a touring show for the first time a great head start on what they're looking for!



SpotTrack can store two pictures for each character, so perhaps two different costumes.

Pictures can be any standard file format - usually .jpg or .png files. To add a picture, pick the character either by finding them in the Cast List then switching to Cast Pics, or by using the <Prev and Next> buttons to step through characters until you find the one you want. Then click on the < button next to one or other picture slot:

This will bring up a file picker allowing you to choose the relevant picture file.



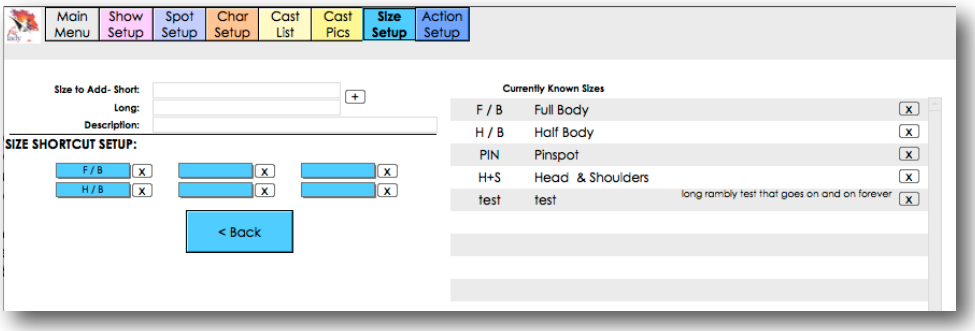
You should normally leave ‘Store only a reference to the file’ unchecked so that SpotTrack inserts a copy of the picture. If you do check this option, SpotTrack will only reference the original file. This will keep your SpotTrack files more compact, but will also mean that if you later move the picture file, it may no longer be displayed in SpotTrack.

You can repeat the process to replace a photograph, or use the ‘x’ button next to a picture to remove it from SpotTrack.

There is space below each picture to add a brief note for that picture.

Note: In some professional productions, there may be copyright or other contractual issues with using cast pictures in this way. You should check with your company manager or theatre administration prior to using cast pictures in SpotTrack.

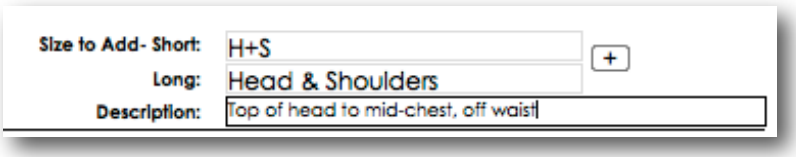
Size Setup



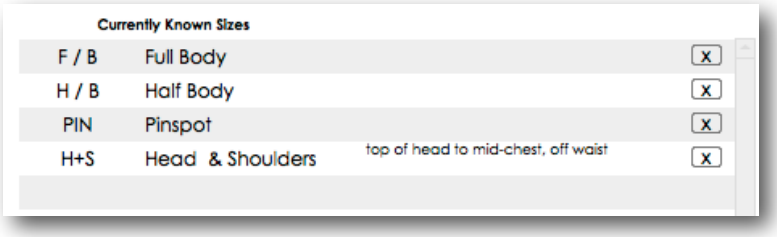
As with the Character Shortcut buttons, SpotTrack has six on-screen Shortcut buttons intended for Sizes that you type regularly - ‘Full Body’, ‘Half Body’, ‘F/B’ and so on. SpotTrack allows you to use your own abbreviations. You can also enter a longer explanation of the abbreviation (‘F/B’: ‘Full Body’), and can print a glossary of these abbreviations for spot operators.

The six Size Shortcut buttons are set up just as Character Shortcut buttons are. As with Character Shortcut buttons, you can store more than six abbreviations and load different ones into the Shortcut buttons as required.

To add a size to the list, type it into the ‘Size to Add - Short’ box, and type a longer explanation (if required) into the ‘Long:’ box, then press the ‘+’ button:

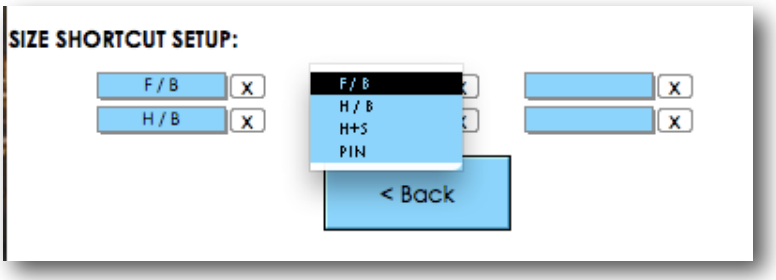


The size and its longer description will now appear in the list of known sizes.



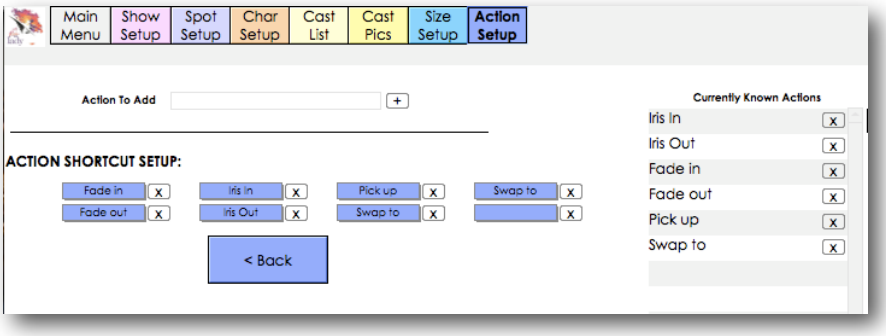
SpotTrack will only allow each size to appear in the list once, and will warn you if you try to add a size it already knows about.

To transfer a size to one of the Size Shortcut buttons, click on the button. A pop-up list will show the full list of sizes; pick the size you want for that button. If you want to clear a Shortcut button, press the 'x' next to that button



You can delete individual sizes from the Character List by pressing the 'x' button next to that size. If you want to, you can delete all of the known sizes using the 'Delete All Sizes' button. In both cases, only the size list will be affected - any cue sheet information you have already entered will not be changed.

Action Setup

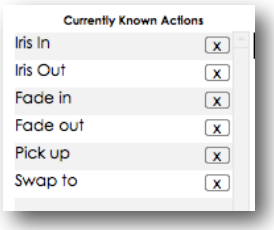


As with the Character and Size Shortcut buttons, SpotTrack has eight on-screen Shortcut buttons intended for Actions that you type regularly - 'Fade In', 'Fade Out', 'Swap to', 'Iris In' and so on.

The eight Action Shortcut buttons are set up just as Character Shortcut buttons are. As with Character Shortcut buttons, you can store more than eight actions and load different ones into the Shortcut buttons as required.

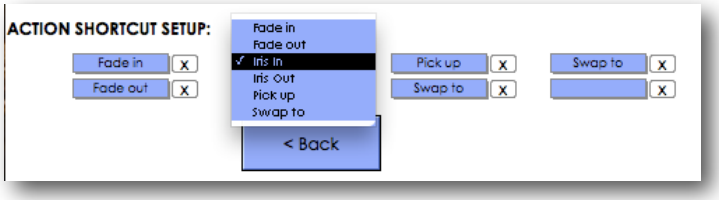
To add an Action to the list, type it into the 'Action to Add' box, then press the '+' button:

The Action will appear in the list of known Actions.



SpotTrack will only allow each Action to appear in the list once, and will warn you if you try to add an Action it already knows about.

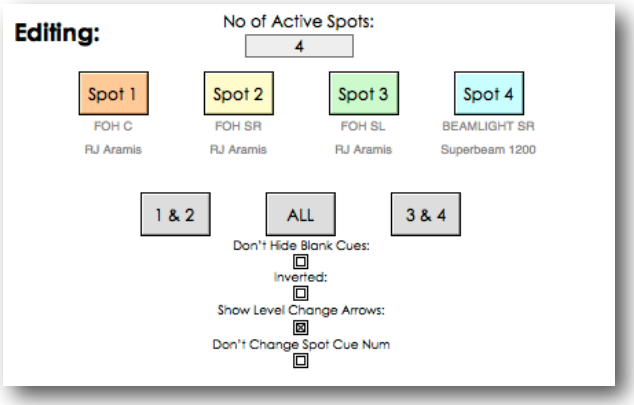
To transfer an Action to one of the Action Shortcut buttons, click on the button. A pop-up list will show the full list of Actions; pick the Action you want for that button. If you want to clear a Shortcut button, press the 'x' next to that button:



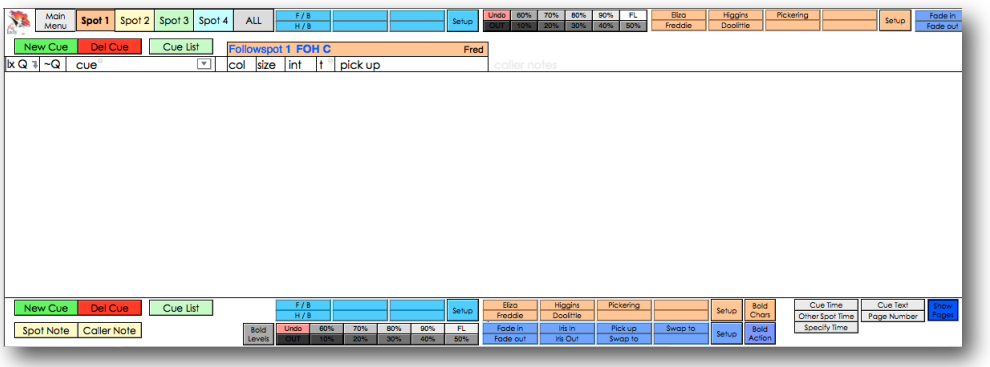
You can delete individual Actions from the Actions List by pressing the ‘x’ button next to that Action. If you want to, you can delete all of the known Actions using the ‘Delete All Actions’ button. In both cases, only the size list will be affected - any cue sheet information you have already entered will not be changed.

6: Working With Cues

You can create and edit cues from the Editing section of the Main Screen.



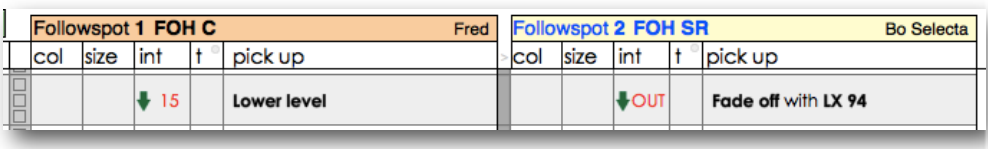
You can choose to work on cue sheets for one spot at a time, or to see two or more spot cue sheets alongside each other by using the relevant buttons, keyboard shortcuts or using the Display menu.



Starting from empty, you can create a new cue using the 'New Cue' button, the menu item Cues > New Cue, or the keyboard shortcut ⌘-N (on a Mac) or Ctrl-N (on a PC).

You can type anywhere by clicking on the relevant field, or move between fields using the tab and shift-tab keys to move right or left across a cue.

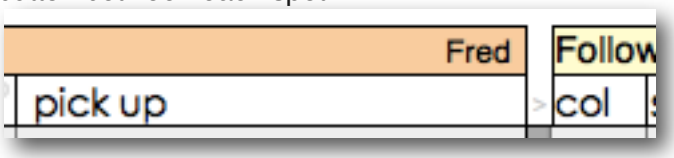
If you have more than one spot displayed, the current active spot will have its title in Blue:



The current active spot will be the last spot you have clicked on.

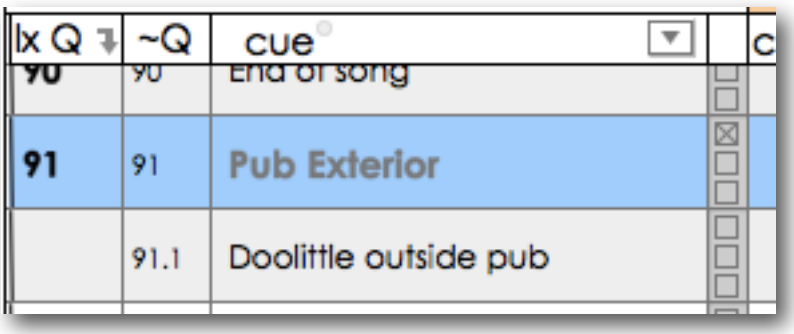
If you use one of the on-screen Shortcut buttons for Character, Size, Action or Level, or the Cue Time or Other Spot Time buttons, the button will enter the information for the current active spot.

You can also quickly copy information from one spot to the next using the '>' button between each spot.



All of the cue information will be copied automatically if the spot you are copying too has no cue information; if it does have cue information you will be asked whether you want to over-write that information with the copied information.

Cue Numbers



Cues have two numbers associated with them:

lx Q: is usually the nearest lighting cue number to the followspot cue point. Using lighting cue numbers in this way gives a set of reference points common to all departments - stage management, the lighting designer, the lighting console and the spot ops.

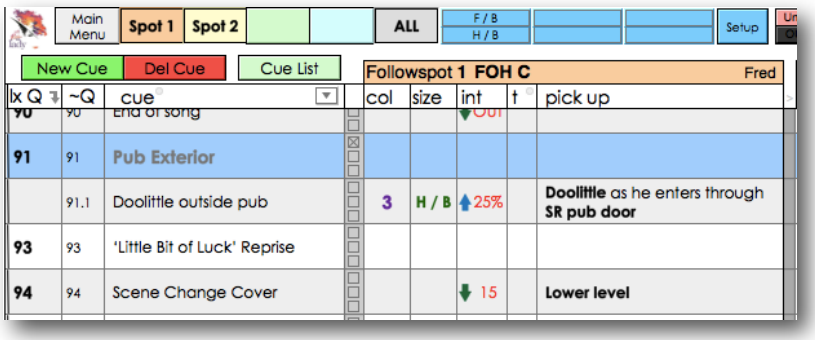
~Q: is the followspot cue number, which is a unique reference number for each followspot action. In many cases there will be many spot cues that happen within one lighting cue, so 'lx Q 91' might mark the first spot cue in this section of the show, with spot cues 91.1, 91.2 and so on following on from there.

When you create a new spot cue, SpotTrack will attempt to insert a meaningful spot cue number based on the current LX Q number and nearby spot cue numbers. You can modify the spot cue number at any time, but you should ensure that every spot cue has a spot cue number. It is this number that is used to ensure that spot cues appear in the correct order. Cues do not need to have an lx Q number.

Note: If you create spot cues ahead of production just using ~Q numbers, because you don't yet know the corresponding LX cue numbers, SpotTrack may try to replace your ~Q numbers when you start adding LX Q numbers during tech, which can get very confusing as cues may appear in the wrong places in the show (since the ~Q is the number used to keep cues in order). To avoid this, check 'Don't Change Spot Cue Num' on the Main Screen when working in this way.

Cue Information

The other information associated with a cue is:



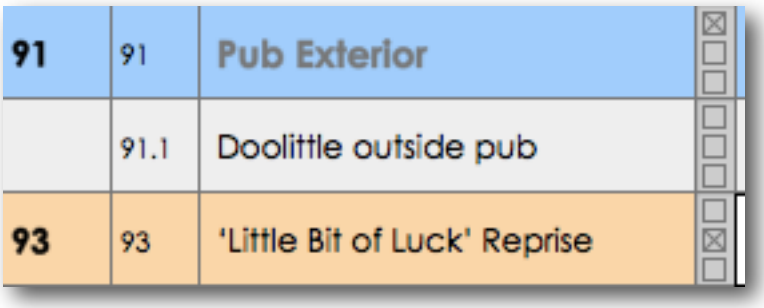
Cue: This is usually a description of the cue point: "As Eliza enters USC'. The cue description is common across any of the spots that have a cue here.

You can type anything here, or use the Character Shortcut buttons to enter text if you have already clicked in the Cue field (the Character Shortcut button will enter text into either the Cue or Pick-up fields, depending on which you have clicked in. By default, the Character Shortcut button will type into the Pick-up field; see below).

You can also use this as a description of a new scene- 'Ballroom' - to help break up the cue list. If you also mark the cue as a Scene or Song Break, it will show up with a highlighted background - see below.

Alternatively, if you've imported the show cue list into SpotTrack you can copy the cue text from the corresponding cue by clicking on the small dot next to 'cue', pressing the Cue Text button, or pressing apple-X (Mac) or ctrl-X (PC) - think X for te**X**t. See p48 for details of how to import the cue list.

Scene/Song Break: There are three check boxes for each cue, two you can use to indicate that a cue is a break point between scenes or songs, the third to indicate a page break:



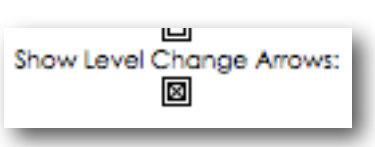
Checking the top box marks the cue as the start of a scene, the middle box the start of a secondary point such as a song. Scenes are highlighted with a dark blue background, songs with an amber background; this makes it easy to navigate around the cue list. You can also jump directly to scene breaks without having to scroll through the cue list by clicking on the pop-up list next to the 'cue' column heading.

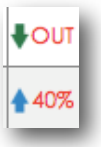
The bottom check box is used to indicate that that cue should start on a new page in printed cuesheets - useful when starting a new act.

Colour: This is usually a colour frame number or numbers. You enter this information by typing the relevant frame number.

Size: This is the size the spot should be for the pick-up. You can type anything here, or click on one of the Size Shortcut buttons you have previously created.

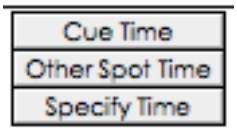
Intensity: This is the intensity the spot should fade up to. You can type a numeric value here, or use the on-screen Intensity shortcut buttons. SpotTrack can show an up or down arrow to indicate whether the cue is fading the spot up or down. These arrows will only show if you have checked 'Show Level Change Arrows' on the Main screen. (Note that in some cases, particularly on older, slower computers, having this option on can slow down scrolling through the cue list, so you may wish to turn it off while making rapid edits.)



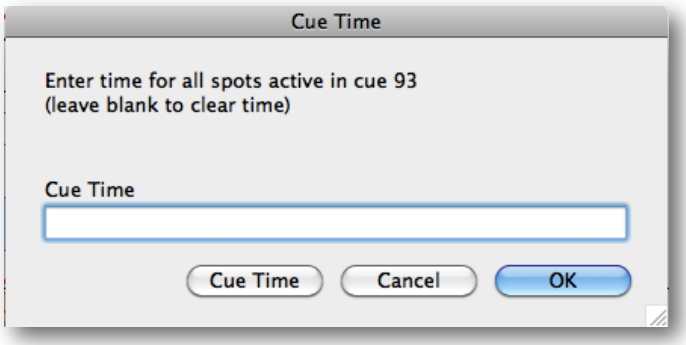


Time: This is the time for the spot's cue. Each spot has its own cue time, or you can just leave the cue time blank. You can enter a time by clicking in the field and typing the time in seconds; SpotTrack will automatically add an 's' after the time.

Alternatively, you can specify a time by pressing one of the three Time buttons at the bottom or top of the screen:



- Cue Time will set the time for the currently selected spot to the up time of the corresponding cue number from the cue list, if you have imported a cue list from FocusTrack. See p48 for details of how to import the cue list.
- Other Spot Time will set the time for the currently selected spot from the time set for one of the other spots in the same cue. If the spots have different times in the same cue it will pick the time from the lowest spot number with a time.
- Specify Time will bring up a dialogue box asking you to enter a time: any spot that has activity in the current cue will have its time set to the time you specify.



- You can clear all of the times in a cue by entering a blank time. If you click Cue Time, any spot with activity in that cue will be set to the Up time of the current cue, if you have imported a cue list from FocusTrack. See p48 for details of how to import the cue list. This is the quickest way for setting a time to all of the spots simultaneously.

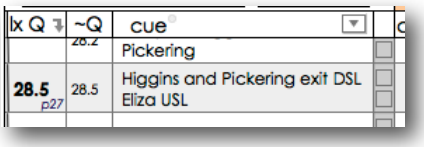
There is also a time ‘button’ at the top of the time column - the small dot next to the time ‘t’.

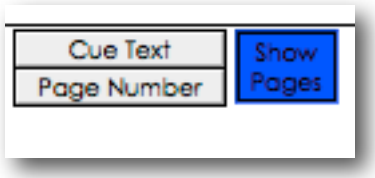
Clicking on this will attempt to set the time for the current spot in the currently selected cue ‘intelligently’ - it will set it to the cue time if available (ie. if you have imported a cue list from FocusTrack), or failing that will set it to the time of another spot in the same cue. If there is already a time set for this spot, it will not be changed.

Pick-up: This is usually a description of the pickup or action of the cue: “Mrs Higgins DSR”, “Iris in as he sits”. You can type anything here, or click on one of the Action Shortcut buttons you have previously created. You can also use the Character Shortcut buttons to enter text here (the Character Shortcut button will enter text into either the Cue or Pick-up fields, depending on which you have clicked in. By default, the Character Shortcut button will type into the Pick-up field).

Caller notes: This is a space for private notes for the spot caller; these notes do not appear on any print-outs.

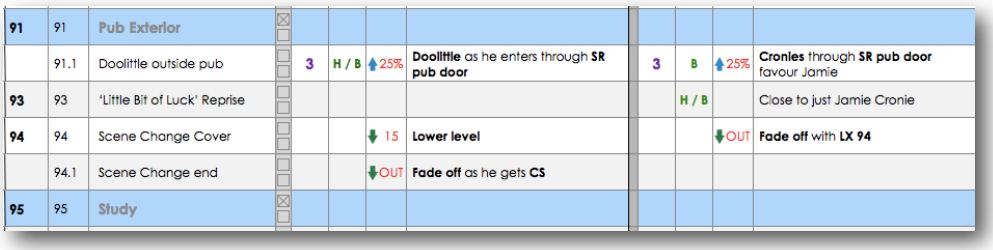
Page number: You can make a note of the script page number that a cue appears on in any cue.





You can add a page number by selecting the cue then pressing the ‘Page Number’ button, or using the Cues > Add Page Number menu, or using the keyboard shortcut ⌘-G (Mac) or ctrl-G (PC) - think page. Shift-⌘-G (Mac) or shift-ctrl-G will let you remove a page number. You can also toggle whether page numbers are visible or not using the ‘Show Pages’ button; this toggle applies to on-screen displays and also to the Spot Caller printouts.

Each cue can contain information for one or more spots. If a cue only affects one spot, the other spots will have blank entries for that cue.


91 91 Pub Exterior
91.1 Doolittle outside pub 3 H / B 25% Doolittle as he enters through SR pub door 3 B 25% Cronies through SR pub door favour Jamie
93 93 'Little Bit of Luck' Reprise H / B Close to just Jamie Cronie
94 94 Scene Change Cover 15 Lower level OUT Fade off with LX 94
94.1 Scene Change end OUT Fade off as he gets CS
95 95 Study

You can choose whether or not you see these blank entries when editing or printing spot cues using the ‘Don’t Hide Blank Cues’ (for editing) and ‘Same Page Breaks’ options.

In both cases, when the option is checked you will see or print blank cues for selected spots. This is useful when editing as you can quickly see all existing

cues. It's useful when printing as all of the spot will have the same cues on the same pages, at the expense of having more 'blank' cues in their cuelist.

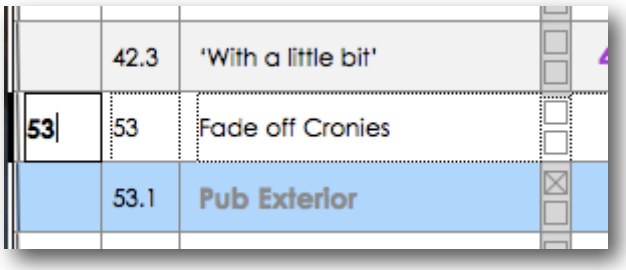
Usually it's best to have these options checked when creating a show and to have them unchecked when things have settled down a bit and you want to give the spots only the information they actually need.

CAUTION: *If you try to delete a cue, be aware that it may contain information for spots you don't have on-screen. SpotTrack will try to warn you if this is the case.*

In any field, you can use copy/paste or apply formatting as required to copy or emphasise information. Ctrl-clicking in a field will give a pop-up menu giving quick access to formatting and other useful tools.

Navigating The Cuelist

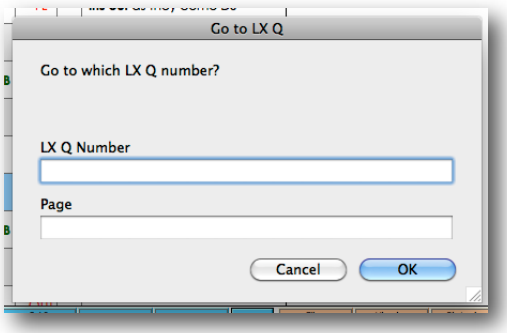
You can move around the cuelist by using the scroll bars or by using a scroll wheel or equivalent trackpad to get to the cue you need to work on. Note that even if you scroll to a cue you do not actually select that cue until you click in that cue. The currently selected cue is shown by the black bar next to the cue:



You can also use ctrl-up arrow and ctrl-down arrow to step up and down through cues, and tab and shift-tab to move right and left across cues.

Alternatively, you can:

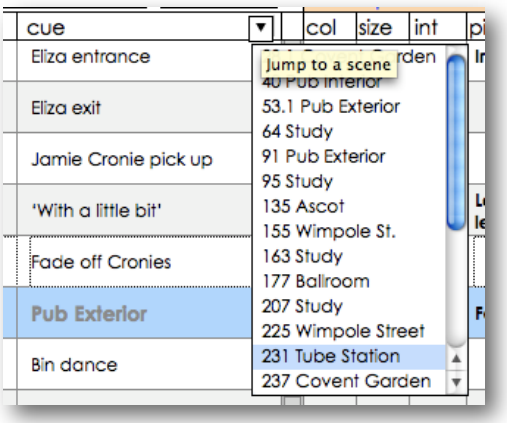
- jump to a specific LX cue number or script page by clicking on the 'go to cue' arrow in the lx Q column title:



You will be asked for a cue number; SpotTrack will take you to the cue number closest to the cue you specify. Keep in mind that the

actual cue you specify may exist but may not appear if it has no actions for the spot you are currently looking at.

- jump to a specific scene by clicking on the symbol next to 'cue':



This will pop up a list of scene names; select one of these and SpotTrack will jump to that point in the cuelist. The Scene Names in this list are cues marked as 'Scene Breaks', ie. with the top 'break' selector box checked.

Editing Shortcut Buttons

You can change the set-up of your shortcut buttons at any time by hitting the 'Setup' button next to each set of shortcuts.

Bold Characters

The 'Bold Chars' button next to the Character Setup button toggles on or off. When toggled on, character names will be inserted in bold. You can over-write the formatting manually at any time.

Bold Action

The 'Bold Action' button next to the Action Setup button toggles on or off. When toggled on, actions will be inserted in bold. You can over-write the formatting manually at any time.

Bold Levels

The 'Bold Levels' button toggles on or off. When toggled on, all intensities will be shown in bold in the on-screen displays and printed cuesheets.

Fat Font

The 'Fat Font' button toggles on or off. When toggled on, cue sheet text is rendered in a 'fatter' font which some users prefer. With this toggle on, this font is used on-screen and on all printed cuesheets.

Clear Formatting

You can apply formatting to cue sheet text manually using the standard formatting tools. However, note that SpotTrack tries to adapt its text sizes to give the maximum amount even on different sized cuesheets. Manually applied formatting (for example, setting a font size to 36) over-rides this and so causes problems when printing these cuesheets.

The ‘Clear Formatting’ button removes any manually applied formatting from the selected cue.

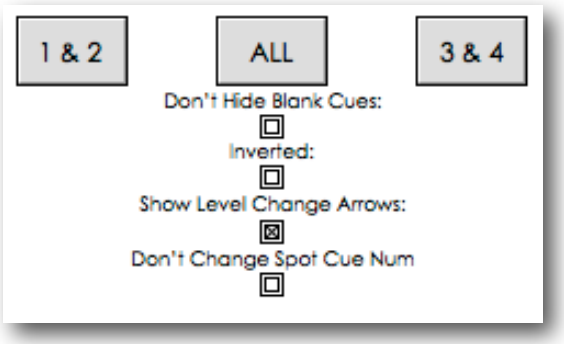
Undoing Changes

You can undo the most recent changes you’ve made to a cue by selecting Edit > Undo Typing, or pressing ⌘-Z (Mac) or ctrl-Z (PC).

You can undo the most recent changes you’ve made to a cue as a whole by pressing the ‘Undo’ button in the Intensity Shortcut button box, or selecting Cues > Revert Cue.

Editing Setup Options

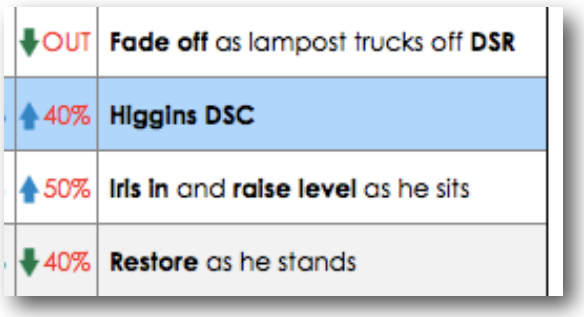
There are three options you can set which affect how you see spot cue sheets as you edit them, which have already been mentioned above.



Don’t Hide Blank Cues: If checked, SpotTrack will only show you cues which have an entry for the particular spot or spots you have chosen to look at (plus cues which are set as ‘scene break’ cues). If unchecked, SpotTrack will show you all of the cues you have created, even if some don’t have any actions for the spot or spots you are looking at.

Inverted: If checked, SpotTrack will switch to a ‘white on black’ display instead of the usual ‘black on white’ display. This can be helpful when working in darkened auditoria or other low-light environments, particularly with LCD monitors that can’t be set to a low enough brightness.

Level Change Arrows: SpotTrack can show up or down arrow symbols to indicate whether a spot is going up or down in level relative to its previous cue level.



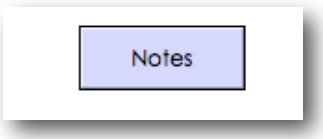
SpotTrack figures these arrows out based on the levels you specify. This figuring out can slow down scrolling through a cue sheet a little, particularly on older, slower computers, so you can disable it by unchecking this option. Generally it can be best to turn this off while editing the cue sheet, but turn it on before printing cue sheets (since it also governs whether arrows are printed) or calling the show from the on-screen cuesheets.

As you edit spot levels, SpotTrack will automatically update the level change arrows; if may take a few moments to do so but you can carry on editing cues while it catches up.

Don't Change Spot Cue Num:

When you add or change an LX cue number, SpotTrack tries to work out a sensible ~Q number. This can be a problem if you've created a show in advance of tech, assigning ~Q numbers before you know the corresponding LX cue numbers. As you start adding LX cue numbers in tech, SpotTrack will replace the ~Q numbers with new numbers based on the LX cues. Because the ~Q numbers define the order that cues appear, things can get confusing! Checking this box means SpotTrack leaves your ~Q numbers alone. In normal use if you're starting a show from scratch in tech you should leave this unchecked.

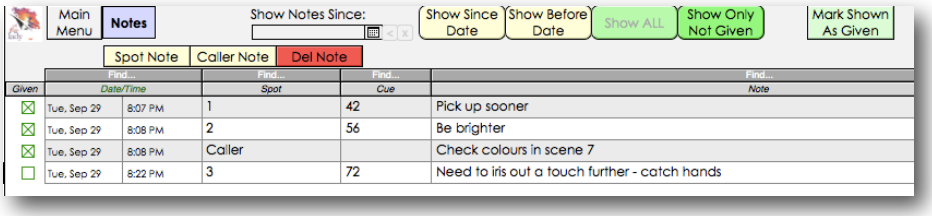
Notes



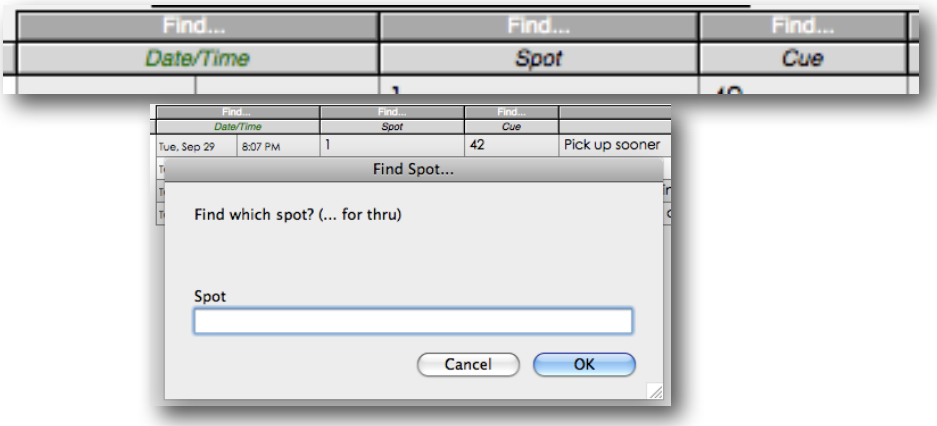
The Notes button on the Main Screen lets you see, edit and delete notes taken during the run of the show using the 'Spot Note' and 'Caller Note' buttons.

Each note will appear here along with the date and time the note was taken, who the note was taken for (spot number or caller), a cue number for reference, and the note itself. A check-box to the left of the note can be used

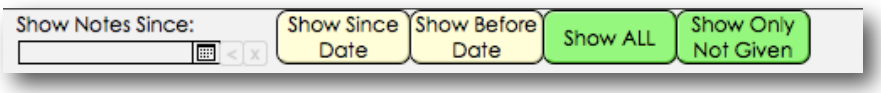
to indicate that a note has been given or deal with if you do not actually want to delete the note. You can also delete individual notes here by clicking in the note then pressing the ‘Del Note’ button.


Main Menu
Notes
Show Notes Since:
Show Since Date
Show Before Date
Show ALL
Show Only Not Given
Mark Shown As Given
Spot Note
Caller Note
Del Note
Given
Date/Time
Spot
Cue
Note
Tue, Sep 29 8:07 PM 1 42 Pick up sooner
Tue, Sep 29 8:08 PM 2 56 Be brighter
Tue, Sep 29 8:08 PM Caller Check colours in scene 7
Tue, Sep 29 8:22 PM 3 72 Need to iris out a touch further - catch hands

Using the buttons at the top of each column, you can sort by a particular column (to see spot notes in spot order, for example), or find particular entries (so to find only the entries for Spot 1, click on the ‘Find...’ button above ‘Spot’, then specify Spot 1).



You can also manipulate which notes you see using the buttons at the top of the screen.



Show Since Date: This will show only notes taken on or after the date specified in the ‘Show Notes Since:’ box. You can type a date into this box, or use the pop-up calendar. ‘<‘ will set today’s date, ‘x’ will clear the date.

Show Before Date: This will show notes taken only before the date specified in the ‘Show Notes Since:’ box.

Show All: This will show all of the notes. If Show All is greyed out then all of the notes are currently shown.

Show Only Not Give: This will only show notes that have not been checked as ‘given’.

Mark Shown As Give: This will mark all of the currently viewed notes as given. This is useful when combined with the other show functions - ie. pick today's date then 'Show Since Date' then 'Mark ALL as given' to mark today's notes as given.

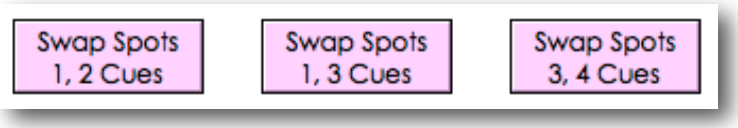
You can always individually mark/unmark a particular note by checking or unchecking its 'given' box.

Delete All Show This button will permanently delete all of the notes you can currently see. It will ask for confirmation before actually deleting the notes. Be careful as once you hit 'OK', those notes are gone.

Printing Notes

You can print notes using the 'Spot Notes', 'Caller Notes' or 'All Notes' from the Printing section of the SpotTrack Main Screen, deciding whether to print all notes, only those you haven't marked as Given, only those created or modified since a date you decide, or any combination of these. For more on printing notes, refer to the Printing section, p41.

Swapping Spots



In some cases, it may be necessary to swap the cues for spots around - this often happens if you move from a theatre with spots front-centre to one with spots on the sides of a circle, for example; you may want to keep the spot numbering the same, but spots may no longer be able to see to their own side of the stage. SpotTrack lets you swap around the cues for spots 1 and 2 or for spots 3 and 4. You will be asked to confirm that you want to swap the cues around, then will be asked for the cue range (start cue to end cue) you want to swap. Leave these blank and the spots will be swapped for all the cues. If you want to swap back, repeat the process.

Note: You can re-name spots to match the physical layout of the spots in your show - see p12. However, re-naming spots in this way is effectively just re-labelling the cuesheet column for each spot; the information contained in those columns will not move. However, you can then use the swap buttons to move cue information back to the right place.

Saving

SpotTrack automatically saves your work as it goes along to prevent lost information if your computer crashes, the power goes out or some other bad event happens.

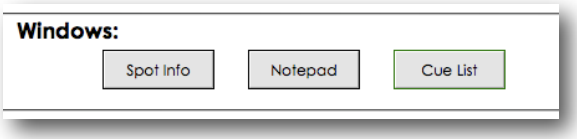
This is a good thing - unless you normally keep different versions by working on a cue sheet then saving it as a different version using ‘Save As...’

If you want to keep a copy of an older cuesheet you should make a copy of the SpotTrack file and rename it as an older version before starting to make changes. The ‘Version Notes’ field in the Main Screen provides a convenient place to note which version a particular SpotTrack is.

SpotTrack can help with version management by highlighting cues that you’ve created or modified since a date you specify when printing cue sheets, allowing you to call the spot ops’ attention to changes. See p43 for more information.

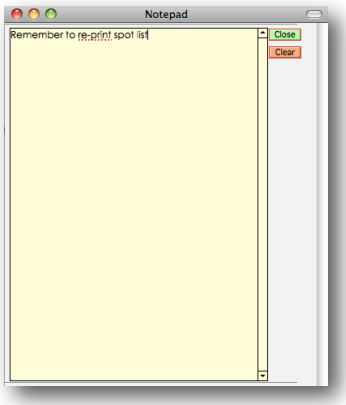
7: Windows

SpotTrack has some auxiliary windows that can be opened alongside the main cue list showing information useful while creating or editing cues.



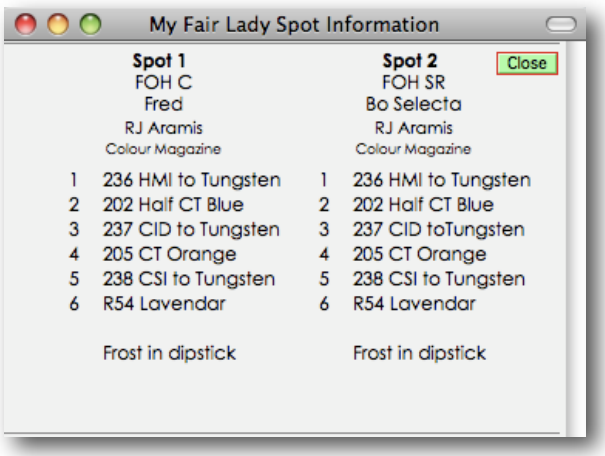
Notepad

You may wish to quickly jot down more general notes than the Notes button allows. SpotTrack lets you keep a separate notepad open in a separate window - from the Main Screen's Windows section, select Notepad:



Spot Info

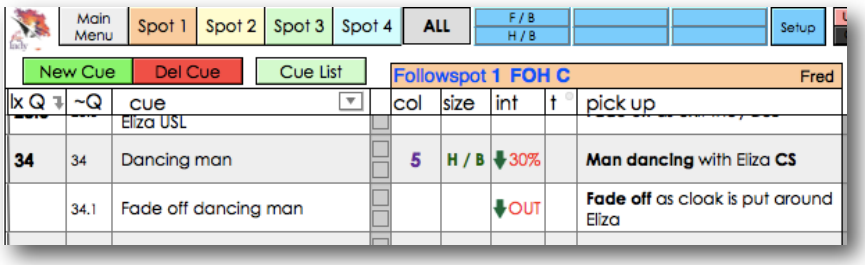
SpotTrack lets you keep the information about the followspot set-up on view in a separate window, which can be useful when remembering an operator's name or the colour set-up of the spot. You can open this window using the Spot Info button in the Main Screen's Windows section.

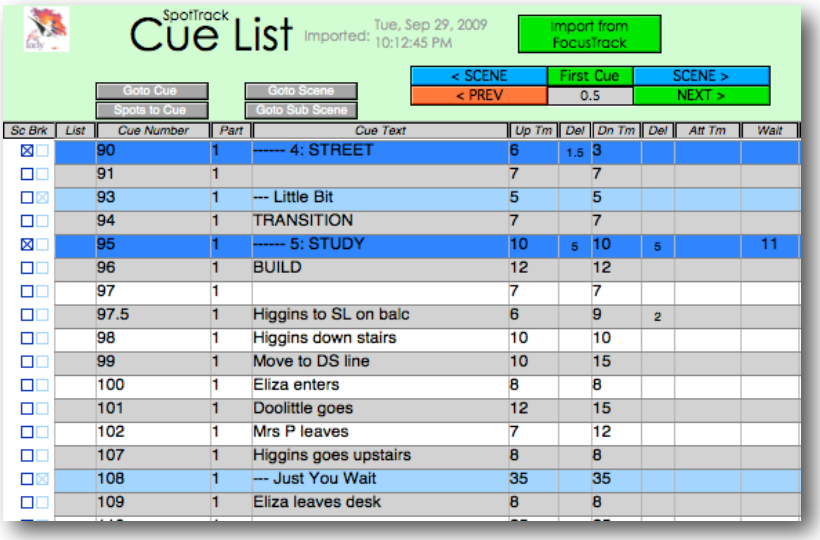


Cue List

It can often be useful for the spot caller to have an up-to-date lighting cue list, particularly to cross-reference cue numbers with. SpotTrack can import the show cue list from FocusTrack (which, in turn, can import it from Strand 300/500, ETC Eos family or MA grandMA consoles); see p48 for details of how to import the cue list.

With the cue list imported, you can open the cue list window using the Cue List button in the Main Screen's Windows section, or the Cue List button on any of the spot cue editing screens.



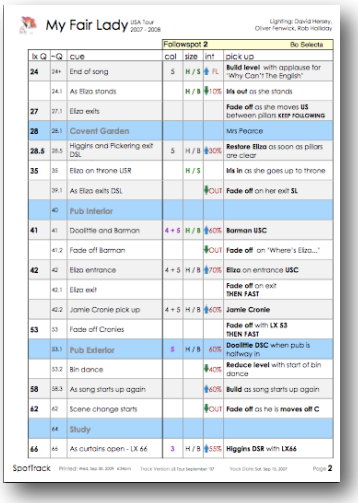

SpotTrack
Cue List
Imported: Tue, Sep 29, 2009 10:12:45 PM
Import from FocusTrack
Goto Cue
Spots to Cue
Goto Scene
Goto Sub Scene
< SCENE
< PREV
First Cue
0.5
SCENE >
NEXT >
Sc Brk
List
Cue Number
Part
Cue Text
Up Tm
Del
Dn Tm
Del
Att Tm
Wait
90 1 ------ 4: STREET 6 1.5 3
91 1 7 7
93 1 --- Little Bit 5 5
94 1 TRANSITION 7 7
95 1 ------ 5: STUDY 10 5 10 5 11
96 1 BUILD 12 12
97 1 7 7
97.5 1 Higgins to SL on balc 6 9 2
98 1 Higgins down stairs 10 10
99 1 Move to DS line 10 15
100 1 Eliza enters 8 8
101 1 Doolittle goes 12 15
102 1 Mrs P leaves 7 12
107 1 Higgins goes upstairs 8 8
108 1 --- Just You Wait 35 35
109 1 Eliza leaves desk 8 8

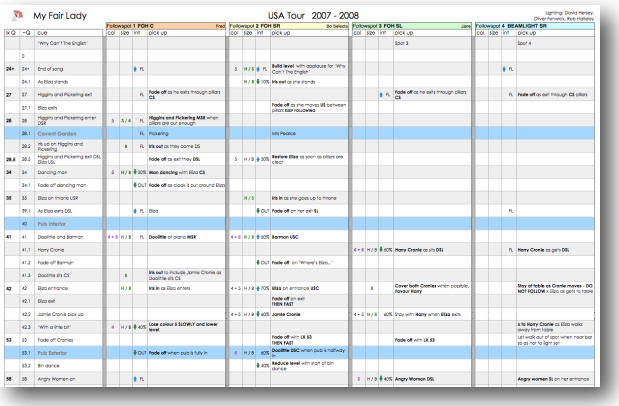
For more on using the Cue List display, see Cue List on p48.

8: Printing

SpotTrack can print separate cue sheets for each followspot, and also master spot calling sheets with the cues for all of the followspots, designed for a spot caller to work from.

The individual spot cue sheets are designed to work on A4 or US letter-sized or legal-sized paper. The master calling sheets work better on bigger paper - eg. A3 or US legal.



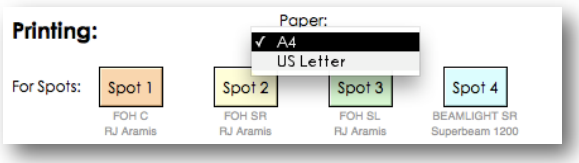


Printing is controlled from SpotTrack's Main Screen.

Spot Cue Sheet Printing Setup

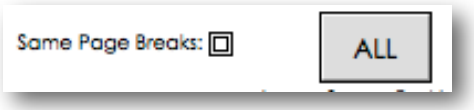
The options you can set prior to printing are:

- Paper size for individual spot cue sheets - A4, A5, US Letter or US Legal.



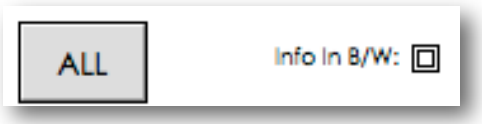
This setting governs SpotTrack's internal page size. Depending on your computer and printer set-up you may have to configure your printer's paper size separately. A5 cuesheets are printed 'landscape' on A5 paper, and are intended for creating smaller, top-bound 'flip-over' cuesheets for situations where spot operators do not have room for larger cuesheets.

• Same Page Breaks



This governs whether SpotTrack compresses each spot's cue sheet to save paper- ie. spot 1 will not see 'blank' cues where only spot 2 has any activity in those cues. This is more efficient in terms of using less paper and reducing the amount of redundant information or page changes for each operator, but it does mean that each spot op will have a different number of pages and so the same cue may be on different pages. Often it is useful to have this checked during tech (so everyone can refer to page numbers), unchecked once the show has settled down.

• Info In B/W

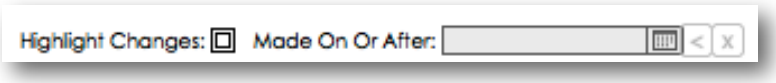


SpotTrack cue sheets usually print in colour on colour printers so that the printed cuesheets match the on-screen cuesheets and help the spot ops differentiate between different types of information. The colouring can be a problem for spot operators under some lighting conditions (eg. blue running lights when the spot ops are visible to the audience). Checking this box prints level and other information in black and white to make it more legible under these conditions.

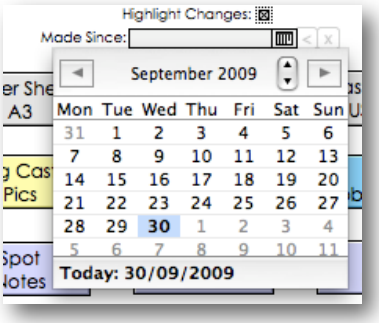
• Leave Space For Notes

Checking this will print cue sheets with a blank line under each SpotTrack cue line, giving spot operators somewhere to add notes of their own during tech. You can and should collect these notes and add them to SpotTrack to ensure the 'permanent' cue sheets are as detailed and accurate as possible!

• Highlight Changes



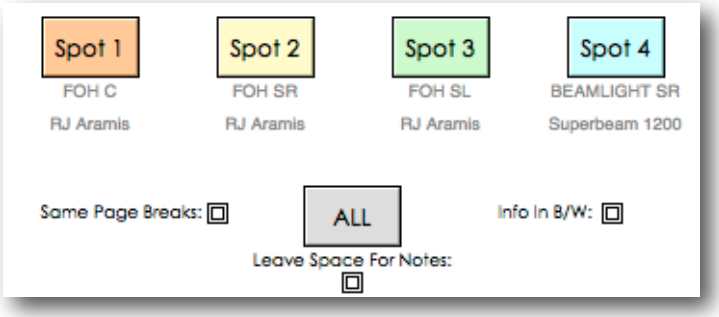
SpotTrack can highlight cues that have been created or modified since the date selected in the 'Highlight Changes Since:' box. The highlight - a green edge to the cue - only appears in printed cue sheets. To enable the highlight, check 'Highlight changes' and then enter a date into 'Made Since:', either by typing a date or picking the date from the pop-up calender:

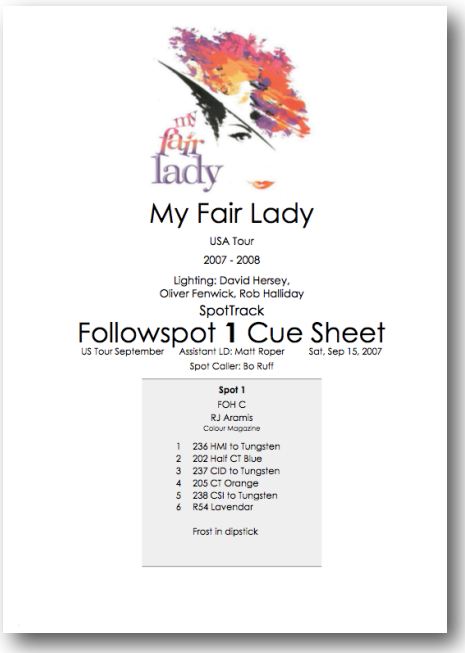


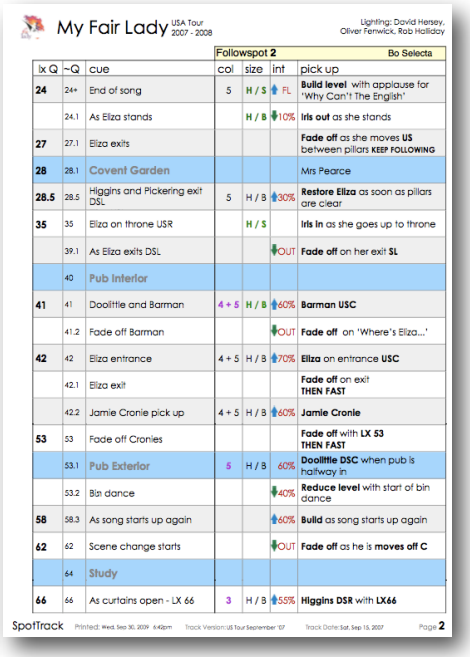
You can clear a date by clicking on the 'x' next to the date field; '<' will enter today's date.

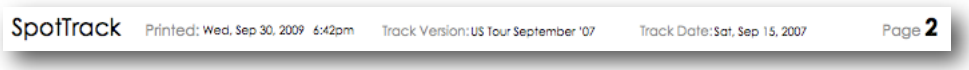
Note: Printed cuesheets are also affected by the option to 'Show Only FL/Out In Printed Cue Sheets', which can be found under the About SpotTrack button on the Main screen; see p53 for details of this. If your printed cuesheets are only ever showing FL or 0 as levels regardless of the levels you've entered on-screen, this option is almost certainly to blame!

Printing Cue Sheets






My Fair Lady USA Tour 2007 - 2008
Lighting: David Hersey, Oliver Fenwick, Rob Halliday
Followspot 2
Bo Selecta
lx Q ~Q cue col size int pick up
24 24+ End of song 5 H / S FL Build level with applause for 'Why Can't The English'
24.1 As Eliza stands H / B 10% Iris out as she stands
27 27.1 Eliza exits Fade off as she moves US between pillars KEEP FOLLOWING
28 28.1 Covent Garden Mrs Pearce
28.5 28.5 Higgins and Pickering exit DSL 5 H / B 30% Restore Eliza as soon as pillars are clear
35 35 Eliza on throne USR H / S Iris in as she goes up to throne
39.1 As Eliza exits DSL OUT Fade off on her exit SL
40 Pub Interior
41 41 Doolittle and Barman 4 + 5 H / B 60% Barman USC
41.2 Fade off Barman OUT Fade off on 'Where's Eliza...'
42 42 Eliza entrance 4 + 5 H / B 70% Eliza on entrance USC
42.1 Eliza exit Fade off on exit THEN FAST
42.2 Jamie Cronie pick up 4 + 5 H / B 60% Jamie Cronie
53 53 Fade off Cronies Fade off with LX 53 THEN FAST
53.1 Pub Exterior 5 H / B 60% Doolittle DSC when pub is halfway in
53.2 Bin dance 40% Reduce level with start of bin dance
58 58.3 As song starts up again 60% Build as song starts up again
62 62 Scene change starts OUT Fade off as he is moves off C
64 Study
66 66 As curtains open - LX 66 3 H / B 55% Higgins DSR with LX66
SpotTrack Printed: Wed, Sep 30, 2009 6:42pm Track Version: US Tour September '07 Track Date: Sat, Sep 15, 2007 Page 2



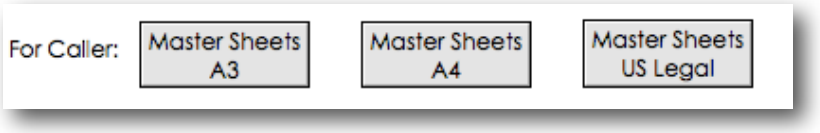
Once you have set the options, press either the print button for the particular spot you wish to print, or the All button to print all of the spot cue sheets.

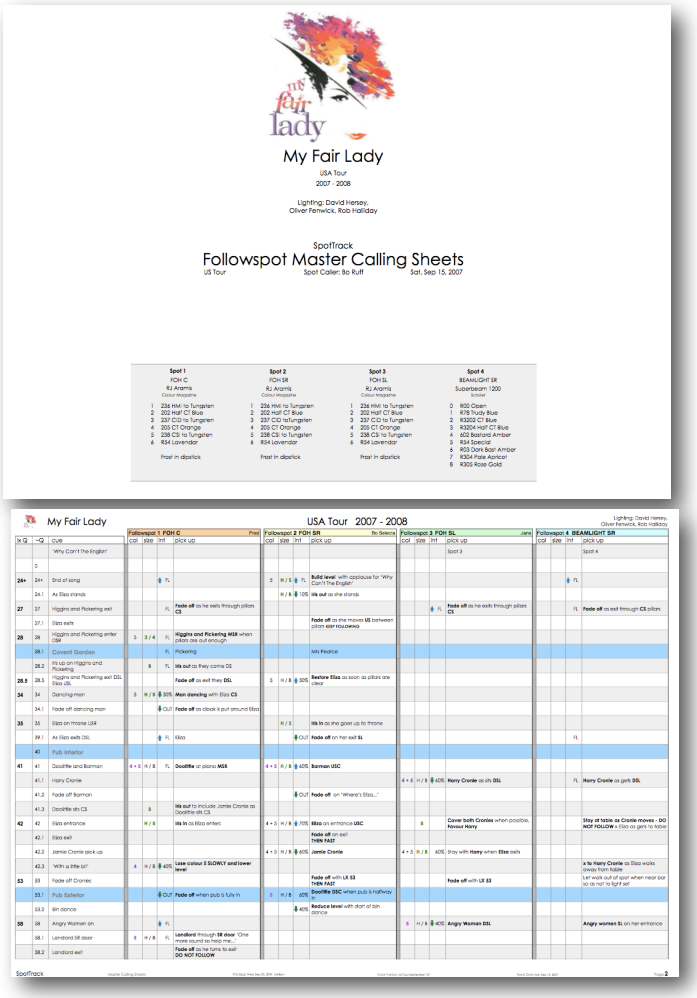
Cue sheets are printed with a cover sheet showing the spot's operator and set-up. Each page has a page number and also shows the track version it was printed from, and the date and time the cue sheet was printed, which can help with version management while teching a show. A5 cuesheets do not have the spot set-up printed on the cover sheet.

The Master Sheets will show change highlights (if selected) and level change arrows (if selected under the Editing section of the Main screen, see p34) as for individual cue sheets.

Cue sheets look best if printed from a colour printer, if available. Colour laser printers tend to be faster and more reliable than colour ink-jet printers (and also generally have lower per-page running costs!)

Master Cue Sheets





The Master Sheets printouts show the cues for all of the spots. They are designed as working documents for a spot caller calling a show 'live', where more information is needed 'at a glance' than will fit on a standard computer screen. They work best when printed on big paper - preferably A3. These cuesheets print in landscape mode - you may need to configure your printer to print landscape.

The Master Sheets - A4 and Master Sheets - US Legal buttons are included for those without access to large printers; they scale the A3 printout, so their legibility will depend on your printer. For other sizes, you may want to manually scale the printout using your printer's print-setup dialogue box.

The Master Sheets will show change highlights (if selected) and level change arrows (if selected) as for individual cues.

Cast Pictures

SpotTrack can print 'contact sheets' of cast pictures either in 'big' format - two characters per page, two pictures per character, or 'small' format, which prints just one picture per character (the left-hand picture picture from the Cast Pics set-up is used in this print-out).

Size Abbreviations

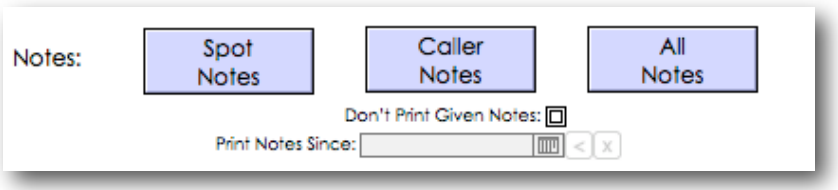
My Fair Lady USA Tour 2007 - 2008
Lighting: David Hersey, Oliver Fenwick, Rob Halliday
Size Abbreviations
US Tour September '07
Assistant LD: Matt Roper
Spot Caller: Bo Ruff
Sat, Sep 15, 2007
1/2 B Half Body
From Head to just below the Waist or logical costume point (i.e., Jacket)
3/4 B Three-Quarters Body
From Head to just below knees or logical costume point (i.e., Cloak or dress/skirt)
FB Full Body
Head to Toe (Include Toes)
H & SH Head & Shoulders
Include Head & Shoulders
Head Head Shot
Just the Head
T 1/2 B Tight Half Body
Head to Waist (i.e. belt line)

Size Abbreviations is the glossary of short phrases for beam size ('F/B') and the longer explanation ('Full Body') and detailed description that you set up in Size Setup. This is printed separately from spot cue sheets since you'll probably only need to print it once per spot per show.

Spot Setups

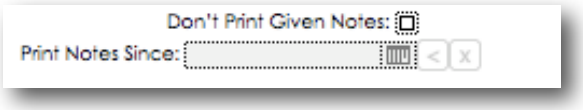
SpotTrack can print 'setup sheets' for each spot, detailing the spot type, operator and colour load. These are useful for passing to the crew to load the correct colours into the spot.

Notes



SpotTrack can print notes taken during a show using the 'Spot Note' and 'Caller Note' buttons (see p35) - you can print either notes for the spots, notes for the caller, or all notes.

You can choose to print all notes, or only notes taken since a date you specify in the 'Print Notes Since:' box, either by typing a date or picking from the pop-up calendar. You can also choose not to print notes you've already marked as being given by checking the 'Don't Print Given Notes' box.



These two options allow you to keep all of the notes you've taken while only printing the most recent ones. For more information on managing notes, see the Notes section on p35. To print all notes, clear the date by pressing the 'x' button next to the calendar and uncheck the 'Don't Print Given Notes' box. '<' will set the date to today's date.

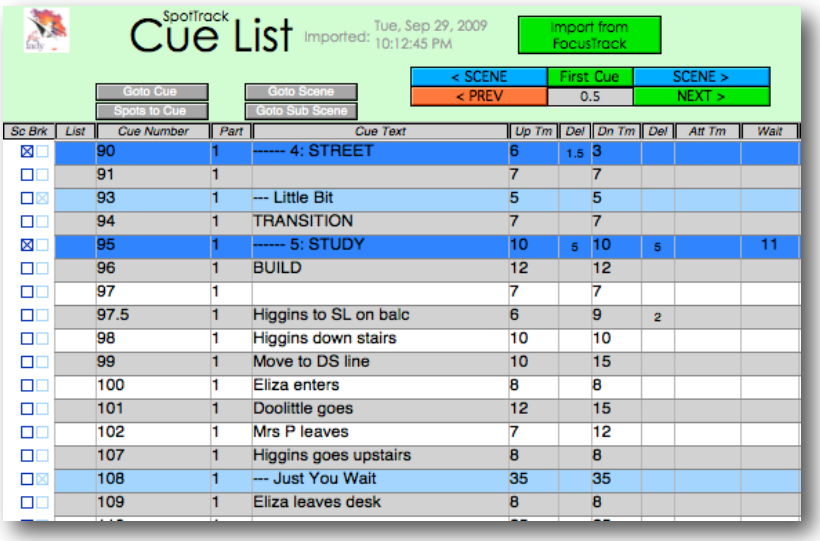
A General Note On Printing

While you obviously need to print cue sheets for your spot ops (and SpotTrack has been designed to make that easier to do!), please remember that printing uses trees. Be considerate with what you print, and consider both using recycled paper to print on, and re-cycling the paper you use as you print updated cue sheets. Depending on your computer, you may be able to use Preview to make sure you're printing the right thing before committing it to paper!

In future, perhaps your spot ops could have screens showing their cue list dynamically, and updated automatically, rather than having to repeatedly print cue sheets. We're working to make that possible in SpotTrack; let us know if you're interested!

9: Cue List

Because it is often useful for a Spot Caller to have a copy of the current lighting console cue list, SpotTrack can import a console cue list generated by FocusTrack - which can, in turn, import the cue data from ETC Eos family , MA grandMA and Strand 300/500-series consoles.



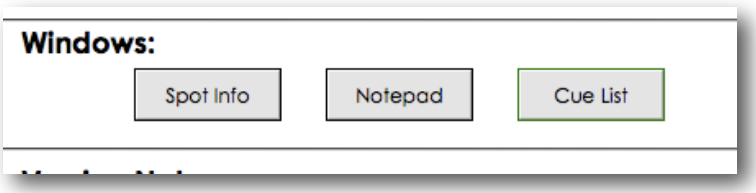
Sc Brk	List	Cue Number	Part	Cue Text	Up Tm	Del	Dn Tm	Del	Att Tm	Wait
☒		90	1	------ 4: STREET	6	1.5	3			
		91	1		7		7			
	☒	93	1	--- Little Bit	5		5			
		94	1	TRANSITION	7		7			
☒		95	1	------ 5: STUDY	10	5	10	5		11
		96	1	BUILD	12		12			
		97	1		7		7			
		97.5	1	Higgins to SL on balc	6		9	2		
		98	1	Higgins down stairs	10		10			
		99	1	Move to DS line	10		15			
		100	1	Eliza enters	8		8			
		101	1	Doolittle goes	12		15			
		102	1	Mrs P leaves	7		12			
		107	1	Higgins goes upstairs	8		8			
	☒	108	1	--- Just You Wait	35		35			
		109	1	Eliza leaves desk	8		8			

For more about FocusTrack, see p58.

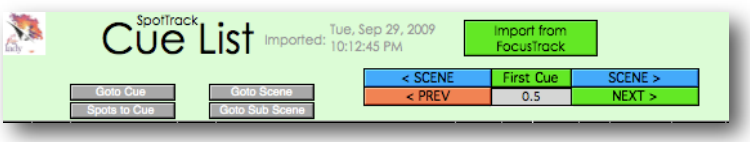
Importing the Cue List

To import a cue list into SpotTrack, it must have first been imported from the console by FocusTrack version 2.000 or later.

Once you have the cue list in FocusTrack, you can import it into SpotTrack from SpotTrack's Cue List display - get to this by pressing the 'Cue List' button in the SpotTrack Main Screen.



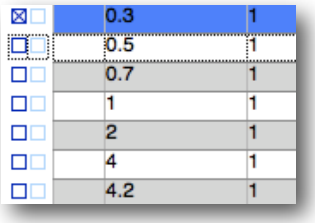
If you don't see a Cue List there, or if you want to update the cue list SpotTrack is using, press the 'Import from FocusTrack' button.



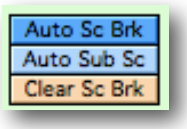
If SpotTrack already has a cue list, it will warn you that this will be replaced by the new one. Hit OK to confirm that. SpotTrack will then ask you to find the 'Cue List.ftr' file for the show you wish to import. This will be located inside the FocusTrack folder for the show. Select that file then press OK. SpotTrack will import the cue list.

SpotTrack will import the entire cue list together with any notes that the LD or programmer has added to the cue sheet in FocusTrack. Scene break markers will also be imported - cues that show up with a blue background, as in SpotTrack.

If cues are not marked as scene break cues (dark blue background) or sub-scene breaks (light blue background), you can mark cues by checking the scene break boxes to the left of each cue.

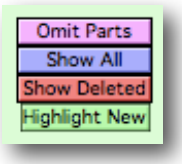


Alternatively if there is any pattern to the way cues are labelled, you can use that to automatically mark cues as scene breaks, using the 'Auto Sc Break' and 'Auto Sub Sc' buttons



For example, if the programmer emphasises the start of each scene in the console using text labels such as '------ SC 1' and '------ SC 2', press 'Auto Sc Break' then enter '------' as the text to match. All cues with labels starting with that text will be marked as scene break cues.

SpotTrack can also show cues which have been added or deleted since the last import from the console into FocusTrack. This can be useful when checking whether cues referenced by the spot cue sheets are still current.

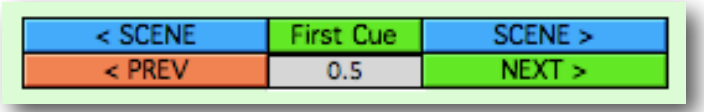


Press the 'Show Deleted' button to see cut cues highlighted in red, the 'Highlight New' button to see newly added cue parts highlighted in green.

If you wish to manually add or delete cue parts, you can do so using the ‘New Cue’ and ‘Delete Cue Part’ buttons. Any changes you make in this way will be lost next time you import cue data from FocusTrack. An indicator at the top of the cue list will show you when you last imported a cue list from FocusTrack.

Navigating Around The Cue List

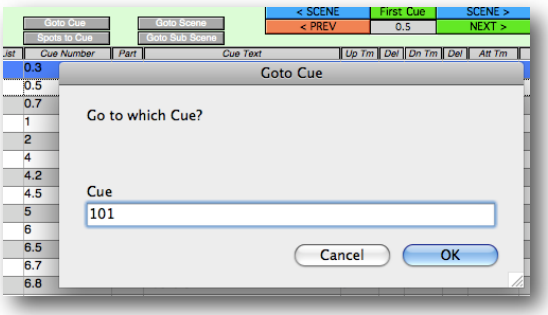
You can scroll through the cue list as you would scroll through spot cues, or use the <PREV or NEXT> buttons to step through cues, or the <SCENE or SCENE> buttons to jump through the show a scene at a time (provided some cues are marked as scene breaks - ie. show up with a blue background).

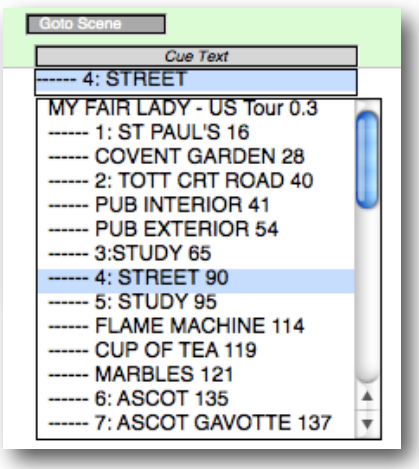


The cue list will also contain part cues, if there are any in the show. These may or may not be of interest to you; you can choose whether to see all of the cue parts, or just the cues using the ‘Omit Parts’ and ‘Show All’ buttons.

(Note: the grandMA console does not support part cues, so you will not see any part cues when importing from that console).

As with SpotTrack cues, you can also jump to specific cues or scenes using the ‘Goto Cue’ or ‘Goto Scene’ buttons.




Goto Scene
Cue Text
------ 4: STREET
MY FAIR LADY - US Tour 0.3
------ 1: ST PAUL'S 16
------ COVENT GARDEN 28
------ 2: TOTT CRT ROAD 40
------ PUB INTERIOR 41
------ PUB EXTERIOR 54
------ 3:STUDY 65
------ 4: STREET 90
------ 5: STUDY 95
------ FLAME MACHINE 114
------ CUP OF TEA 119
------ MARBLES 121
------ 6: ASCOT 135
------ 7: ASCOT GAVOTTE 137

You can also force SpotTrack to jump to a cue you have selected in Cue List using the ‘Spots to Cue’ button.

When you do not need to see the Cue List, you can close it using the ‘Close CueList’ button.

10: Control

About SpotTrack

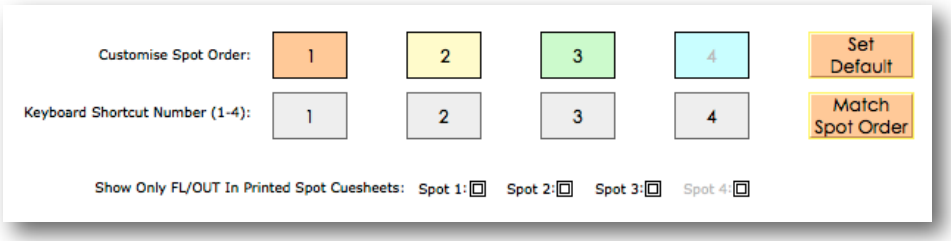
This will give you information about the SpotTrack you are using, including the SpotTrack version, the user and show that SpotTrack is registered to, the charity it is supporting and more.

This screen also allows you to clear all or parts of a SpotTrack. This can be useful if you are creating a new SpotTrack based on an existing one - particularly if you want to keep Size and Action shortcuts you have defined.

Specifying The Followspot Layout

You can re-arrange the order in which the spots appear on the buttons and cuesheets to match the physical layout of the spots in our show (so you could have spots 4, 3, 2, 1), or re-number the spots altogether (so you could have spots 6, 7, 8, 9). You can also re-configure which of the 1-4 shortcut keys (⌘-1-4 on a Mac, ctrl-1-4 on a PC) correspond to which spot.

To configure this, press the About SpotTrack button on the Main Screen.



Click in one of the Spot Order buttons to type a new spot number. If you type a number that is already in use, that number and the number of the spot you selected will swap positions.

Set Default will return the spot order to 1-4; Match Spot Order will match the keyboard shortcut numbers to the spot numbers if possible, though the shortcut numbers will always be 1, 2, 3, 4.

Spot numbers will be changed wherever they appear in SpotTrack, on-screen and in print-outs.

Note: Re-numbering spots does not move any cue information about spots - it is effectively re-labelling the spot columns in the cuesheet. It is best done before starting work on a show. You can swap information between spots using the Swap Spots buttons on the main screen; see p37.

Show Only FL/Out In Printed Spot Cuesheets

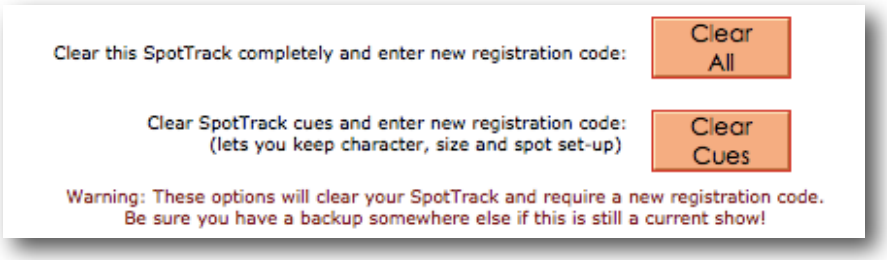
This allows you to record detailed level information in the followspot cuesheets, but have the printed cuesheets show only 0% (when the spot is at 0) or FL (when the spot is any any level other than zero).

This is intended for situations where the level of the spot is being controlled by the lighting console and the spot operator has a mechanical dimmer shutter which they fade from 0 to FL to control their fades on stage - this setup most often used with tungsten beamlight followspots.

In this case, the intention is that the spot caller can keep detailed notes as to the level programmed into the console so they know what to expect when calling the show, but the operators only see when they have to fade in/out rather than worrying about levels.

You can set this behaviour for each spot. When unchecked, spots show the actual level on the printed cuesheets. This option ONLY affects printed cuesheets.

Clearing SpotTrack Completely


Clear this SpotTrack completely and enter new registration code:
Clear All
Clear SpotTrack cues and enter new registration code:
(lets you keep character, size and spot set-up)
Clear Cues
Warning: These options will clear your SpotTrack and require a new registration code.
Be sure you have a backup somewhere else if this is still a current show!

When you buy SpotTrack you buy it for one show only; to enter a new show name you have to clear SpotTrack and enter a new registration code.

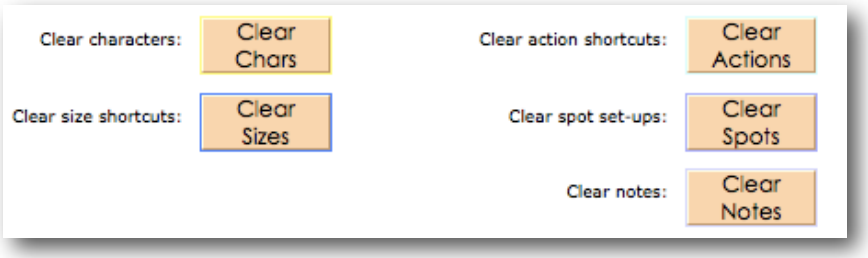
'Clear All' will completely clear SpotTrack and ask you for a new registration code.

'Clear Cues' will just clear the cues and ask you for a new registration code, maintaining your Shortcuts.

WARNING: Using either of these options will clear all of your spot cue information from SpotTrack. Be sure you have a backup of this SpotTrack somewhere else if the show you are clearing is still current or if you need to keep it for archive purposes.

If in any doubt, the safest way to start a new show is to download a new version of SpotTrack from the SpotTrack website, www.spottrack.co.uk. This will also ensure that you start each show with the most current version of SpotTrack.

Partially Clearing SpotTrack



You can partially clear a SpotTrack using these buttons, each of which will clear a specific set of information.

WARNING: All of these buttons will clear sets of information from SpotTrack. Be sure you have a backup of this SpotTrack somewhere else if the show you are clearing is still current or if you need to keep it for archive purposes.

SpotTrack Information

Elsewhere on the About screen, you can find out about recent changes to SpotTrack (this information is also available on the website), jump to the SpotTrack or FocusTrack websites, or find out more about the charities you support by purchasing SpotTrack.

Help

Help provides an on-screen reminder of the most useful keyboard shortcuts in SpotTrack.

Lock Display

This puts up the show logo and locks out access to SpotTrack. It can be useful when a laptop is left unattended in an auditorium. To unlock SpotTrack, hold down the shift key and click on the 'Unlock Display' button.

Quit SpotTrack

This quits SpotTrack. You don't need to save as SpotTrack automatically stores information as you work.

11: File Recovery

In very, very rare cases, usually if your computer crashes while SpotTrack is in the middle of trying to write its information to disc, the SpotTrack data file can become corrupted.

The best defence against this is to make regular backup copies of the SpotTrack data file - this is called ‘SpotTrack.spo’ and is located in the SpotTrack folder for your show. As you make copies, rename them to remind yourself when that SpotTrack was valid to - ‘SpotTrack Sept 1 Tech End’ or a similar scheme to suit your working methods.

If your active SpotTrack file does become corrupted, you can attempt to recover it by running SpotTrack (double clicking on ‘SpotTrack’ on a Mac or ‘SpotTrack.exe’ on a PC), the selecting File > Recover... SpotTrack will ask you to locate the damaged ‘SpotTrack.spo’ file and will then attempt to recover it. This will work in almost all cases...

If it doesn’t work, you’ll have to go back to using one of your backup files. You should delete the damaged ‘SpotTrack.spo’ file, copy the most recent backup file, and rename that ‘SpotTrack.spo’. You should then be able to open and continue to work with that file.

12: Updating SpotTrack

When a new version of SpotTrack appears, you will have to import the information from your current SpotTrack into a new SpotTrack.

To do this:

- Download and install the new version of SpotTrack.
- Run the new SpotTrack entering you registration information; SpotTrack will only import from an old SpotTrack with the same registration information.
- Make sure you have quit your old SpotTrack. Copy the 'SpotTrack.spo' file inside that SpotTrack.
- Rename the old file 'SpotTrack.old'. On a Mac, you may get a warning about changing the file type extension - let it make the change. Make sure you have not changed the name to 'SpotTrack.old.spo' or similar - using the File>Get Info command is usually the best way to rename this file without this happening.
- Move the 'SpotTrack.old' file into your new SpotTrack folder.
- Start the new SpotTrack.
- From the SpotTrack Main Menu, go to 'About SpotTrack', then scroll down past the release notes where you will find a button called 'Import from Old'.

- Press 'Import from Old'. SpotTrack will warn you that this import will over-write any information in the current SpotTrack, remind you where the old file must be placed, then check the registration code of the SpotTrack you are trying to import. If the code matches, all of the show information will be imported. If not, SpotTrack will tell you that the codes don't match.

With the import completed, you can then carry on using your new SpotTrack as normal; you can remove the 'SpotTrack.old' file once the import is complete.

C: Charity

By purchasing SpotTrack for your show, you are supporting one of two entertainment industry charities - The ESTA Foundation's Behind The Scenes in North America, and Light Relief in the UK. You get to choose which your SpotTrack supports when you purchase it, and your SpotTrack will proudly display its chosen charity every time you run it.

Of course, charities can always do with more help, and both charities have a whole range of initiatives through which you can help them with their work. Please do visit their websites to find out more.

Behind The Scenes

www.estafoundation.org/bts.htm

Behind the Scenes provides financial support to entertainment technology industry professionals when they are ill or injured. Individuals and organizations contribute money to the program, and Behind the Scenes provides grants for emergency situations. With this initiative, our industry can make sure our colleagues are cared for when tragedy strikes.

Many people in the entertainment technology industry lack health insurance and other financial support systems that are common for professionals in other fields. Behind the Scenes helps industry members through crises, such as serious illness, injury or death by fitting each grant to the recipient's needs. Funds can be used for medical care and living expenses such as rent, mortgage, utilities, food, transportation and child care.

Behind the Scenes is working to raise $5 million to create an endowment so our industry will be able to help our colleagues for many years into the future. Please contribute today. Any amount will be appreciated. Every contribution will help.

Since May of 2006, Behind the Scenes has been providing grants to industry professionals or their surviving family members to assist in a variety of ways including: short term living expenses such as food, housing and utilities; and assistance with medical bills, health insurance, physical therapy, and medications.

Light Relief

www.lightrelief.org.uk

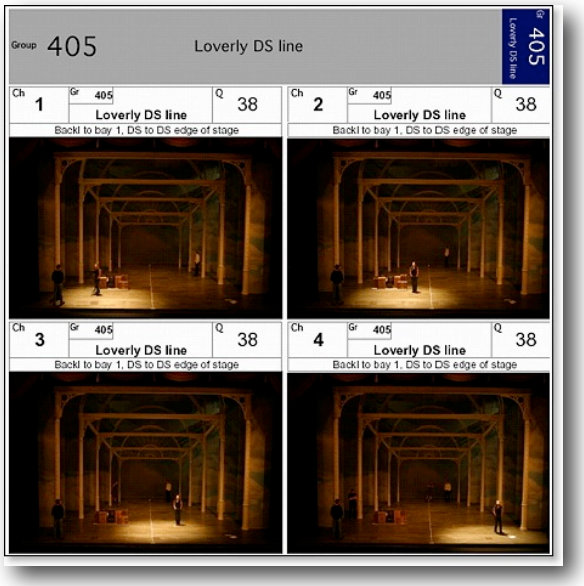
Light Relief is a charity established by and for the entertainment lighting industry, to help in times of extreme hardship. Formed specifically to help theatre lighting designers and those working in the field who are not in regular full time employment, Light Relief can provide either practical support or financial help, depending on the individual need.

With Richard Pilbrow as Honorary Chairman, Light Relief has a board of seven trustees, all of whom work in the entertainment lighting industry.

Most lighting designers and technicians are freelance and earn their living through talent and hard, demanding, physical work during anti-social hours. Like most freelance people, they do not earn money unless they are working, so sickness, physical injuries or domestic crises can lead to dramatic falls of income. This, in turn, affects not just them but also their families.

Light Relief helps people by providing practical support or financial help - occasionally both - and most of the people that we help are lighting designers or technicians, or members of the Association of Lighting Designers. If you know someone who needs help, or if you need help for yourself or your family, assistance may be as near as the click of your mouse.

F: FocusTrack



FocusTrack is a system designed for documenting show lighting, doing as much of the work as possible automatically using information from the lighting console rather than relying on show staff to manually track down information - taking some of the work out of paperwork! If you have show information in other places, such as VectorWorks Spotlight or Lightwright, you can import that as well.

FocusTrack can automatically import show data from ETC Eos/Ion/Gio, MA grandMA and Strand 300/500-series consoles; from that information it can figure out which conventional and moving lights are used, where they're used (which positions, which cues) and how they're used (which colours and gobos).

You can then add other information - written descriptions of the focus, grid focuses. Or you can use FocusTrack to control your lighting console, switching lights on and moving them to the right positions for you to take pictures of the focuses that can then be brought in to FocusTrack to leave you with a complete, comprehensive record of the show lighting.

It also produces a very nice cue list, to which you can add pictures - and which you can import into SpotTrack to give you something to work from while creating your spot cues!

Show lighting is complicated. Keeping it looking right, even more so. FocusTrack can help. Why not give it a go on your next show?

www.focustrack.co.uk